THE ART OF Neverwinter Nights™



FOREWORD

Neverwinter Nights represents the work of over seventy talented individuals at BioWare who have lovingly created the game over the last five years.

This book contains the work of a number of dedicated BioWare artists who have worked very hard to create the art behind the game. We are very proud to be able to introduce to you the results of their hard work.

We hope this book also gives you a glimpse into our production process - the materials in this book include not only finished quality art, but also the interim pieces of work which show you how we build the final art in the game.

We hope this book excites and inspires you, as much as it has inspired us!

Thanks,

Greg and Ray
Joint CEOs and Co-Executive Producers, BioWare Corp.

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CINEMATICS

Cinematics and in-game cutscenes are among the most effective tools in the game designers' bag of tricks, and in Neverwinter Nights two types of movies are used to reveal story elements, set mood, and hook the player into the promise of the world.

In-game cinematic sequences are the "glue" that binds the chapters of the official campaign together, as they move the player on to each new piece of the story. The use of cinematic transitions like cross fades, zooms, and pans between static images help to relate the story, focus the player's attention on key plot details, and summarize his accomplishments to date.

The introductory cinematic for Neverwinter Nights is designed to set the mood for the upcoming adventure without revealing any key plot points. The battle between a young Lord Nasher and his minotaur foe is spectacular and dramatic, but does not spoil the story to come in the Official Campaign. This "Minotaur Fight" introductory movie premiered at the 2002 Game Developer's Conference in San Jose, California.





















CHARACTERS

Neverwinter Nights' ruleset is built from the 3rd Edition of Dungeons & Dragons, a roleplaying game with a venerable pedigree and a huge base of loyal fans. In addition, the game is set in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting, the best known of all D&D worlds. The challenge for artists on the project was to meet the expectations of the fans, while bringing their own vision and creativity to the task, all while working within the scope of the game engine.

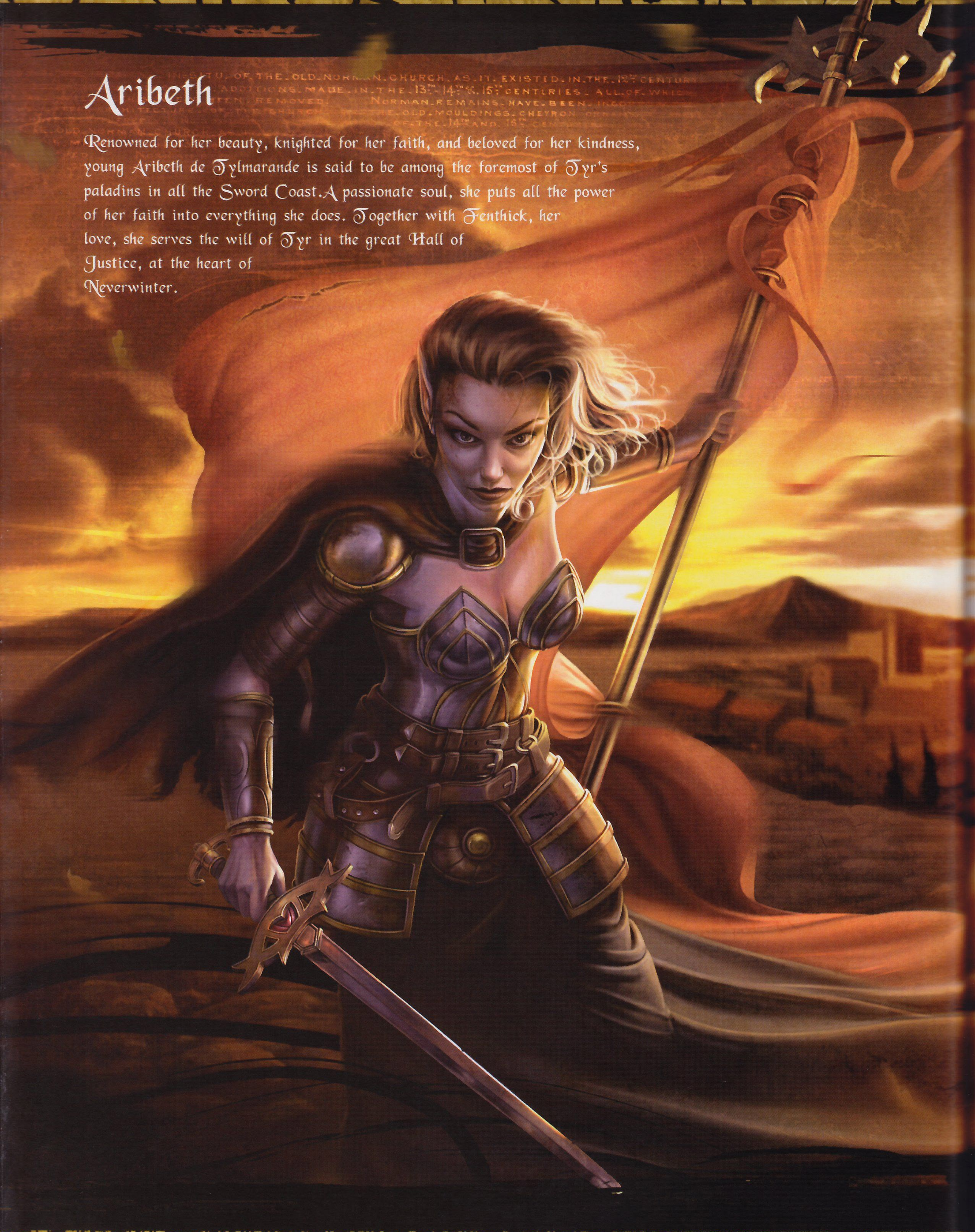
The character artists worked to bring new life to familiar fantasy races such as dwarves and elves, giving them a modern look and feel without sacrificing their essential nature.

In developing key plot NPCs such as Aarin Gend, Lord Nasher Alagondar, and Aribeth de Tylmarande, designers and artists worked together to understand each character, much in the same way that an actor works to get inside his character for a movie role. These plot-critical NPCs were reworked many times before final versions were ready for the game.



Aribeth

Renowned for her beauty, knighted for her faith, and beloved for her kindness, young Aribeth de Tylmarande is said to be among the foremost of Tyr's paladins in all the Sword Coast. A passionate soul, she puts all the power of her faith into everything she does. Together with Fenthick, her love, she serves the will of Tyr in the great Hall of Justice, at the heart of Neverwinter.















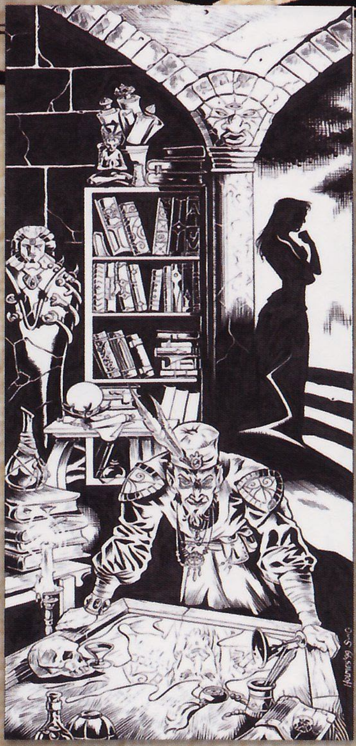


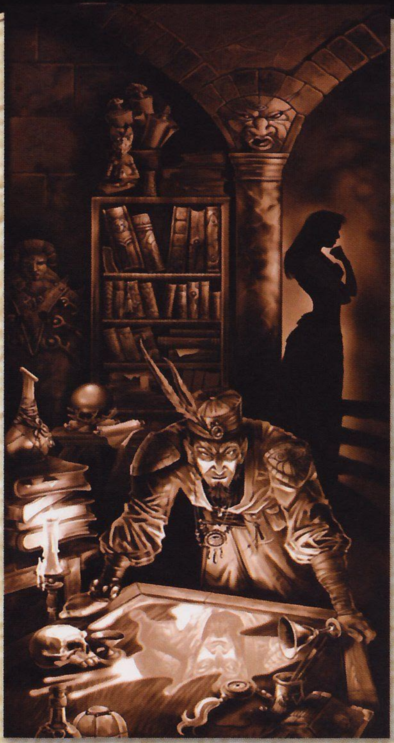


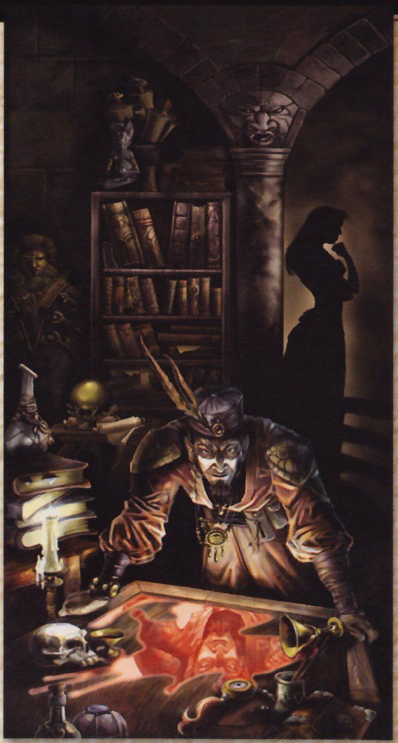


Dungeon Master











Aarin Gend

Silent as a specter, dark as the moonless night, Aarin Gend stalks the plains south of Luskan in Lord Nasher's service. It takes both wit and a keen blade to survive as Neverwinter's Spymaster in this rugged wilderness and this soft-voiced young man has more than enough of either. His calculated air of calm and confidence hides a profound intensity, a deep-rooted will to perform whatever is necessary, whatever the cost.









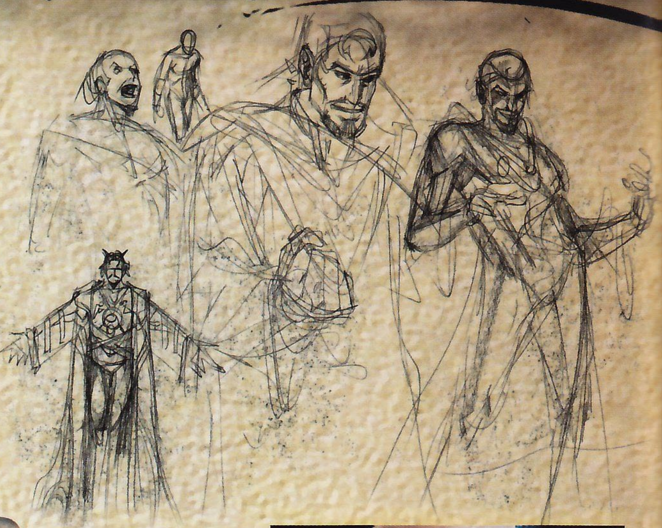


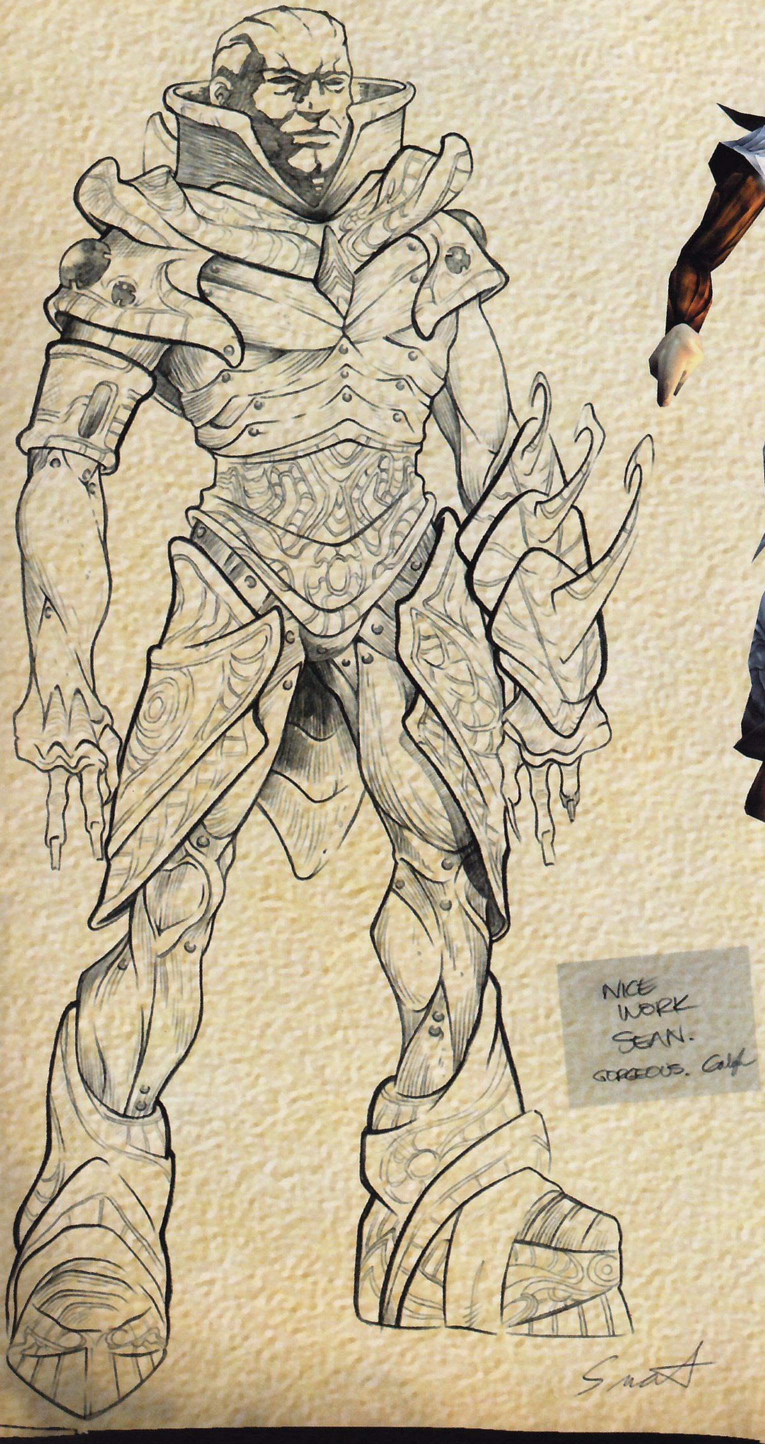




Maugrim

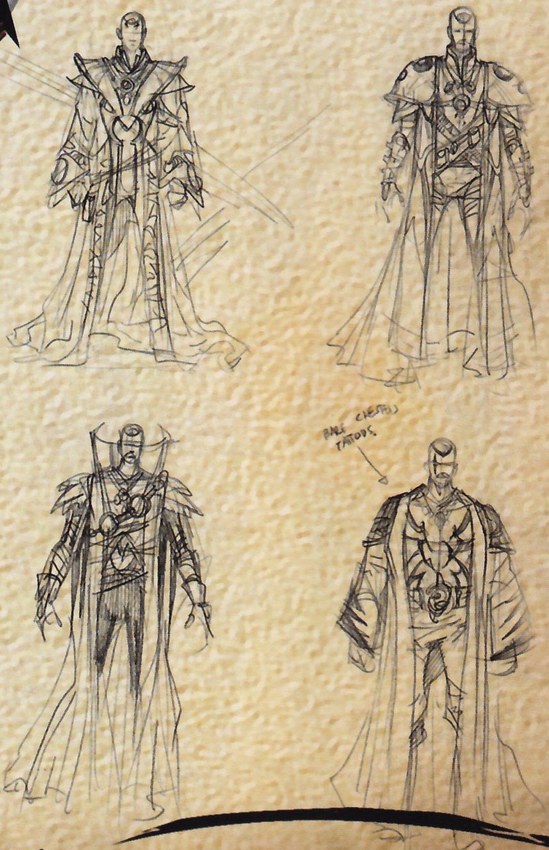
From Promo Material: "Something evil grows in Luskan and Maugrim Korothir rests easy at the heart of it. A high-ranking member of the dreaded Arcane Brotherhood, he hides a power his colleagues will never fathom and a prophecy that will play them each as pawns."





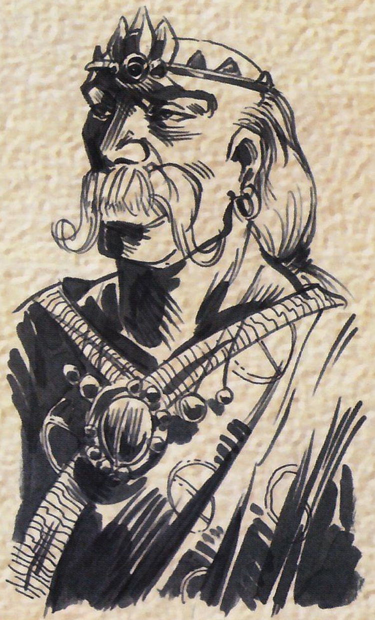




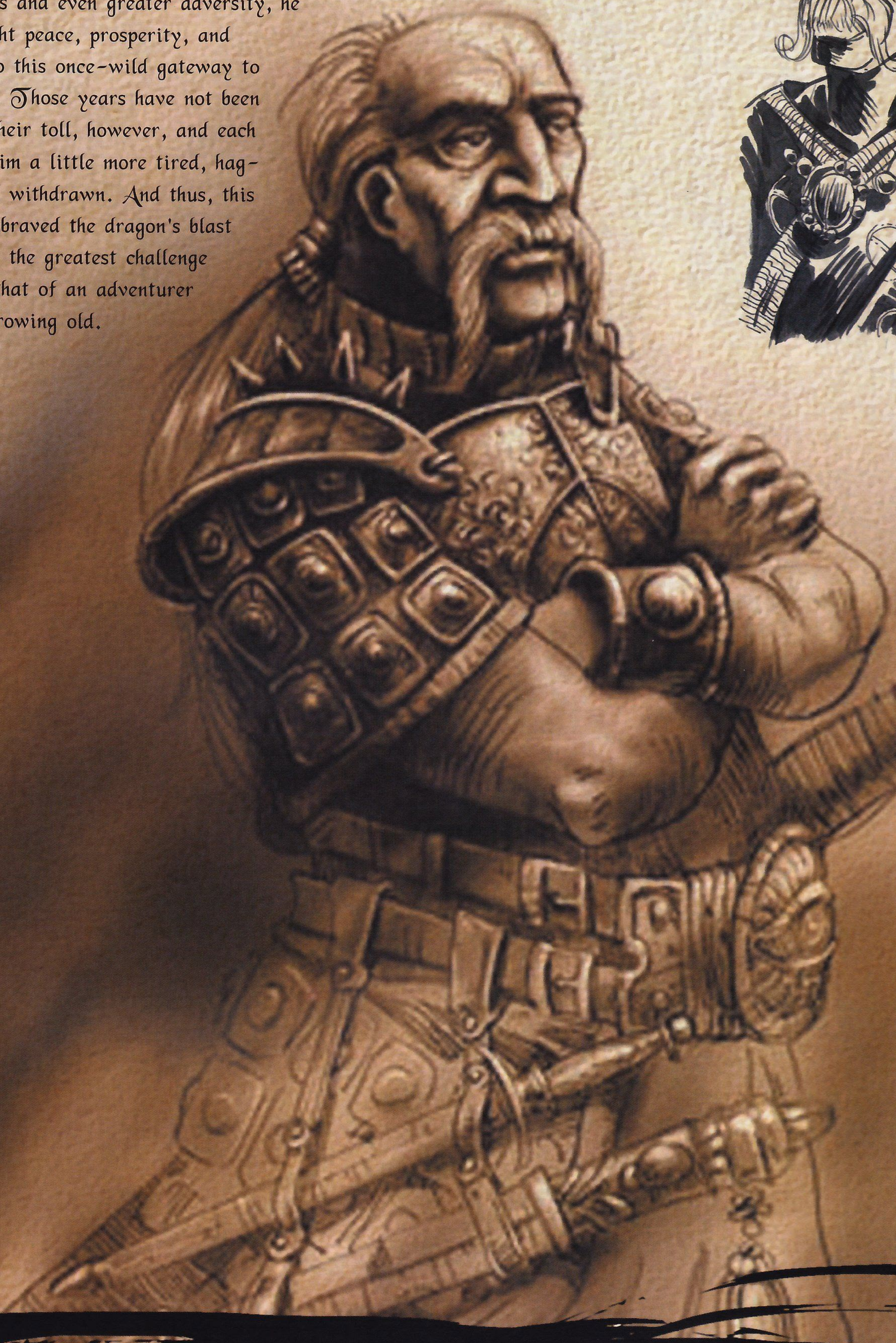




Lord Nasher



Lord Nasher Alagondar, the once-famed adventurer, has ruled Neverwinter for over two decades, now. Against great odds and even greater adversity, he has brought peace, prosperity, and civility to this once-wild gateway to the north. Those years have not been without their toll, however, and each has left him a little more tired, haggard, and withdrawn. And thus, this man who braved the dragon's blast must face the greatest challenge of all - that of an adventurer fading, growing old.



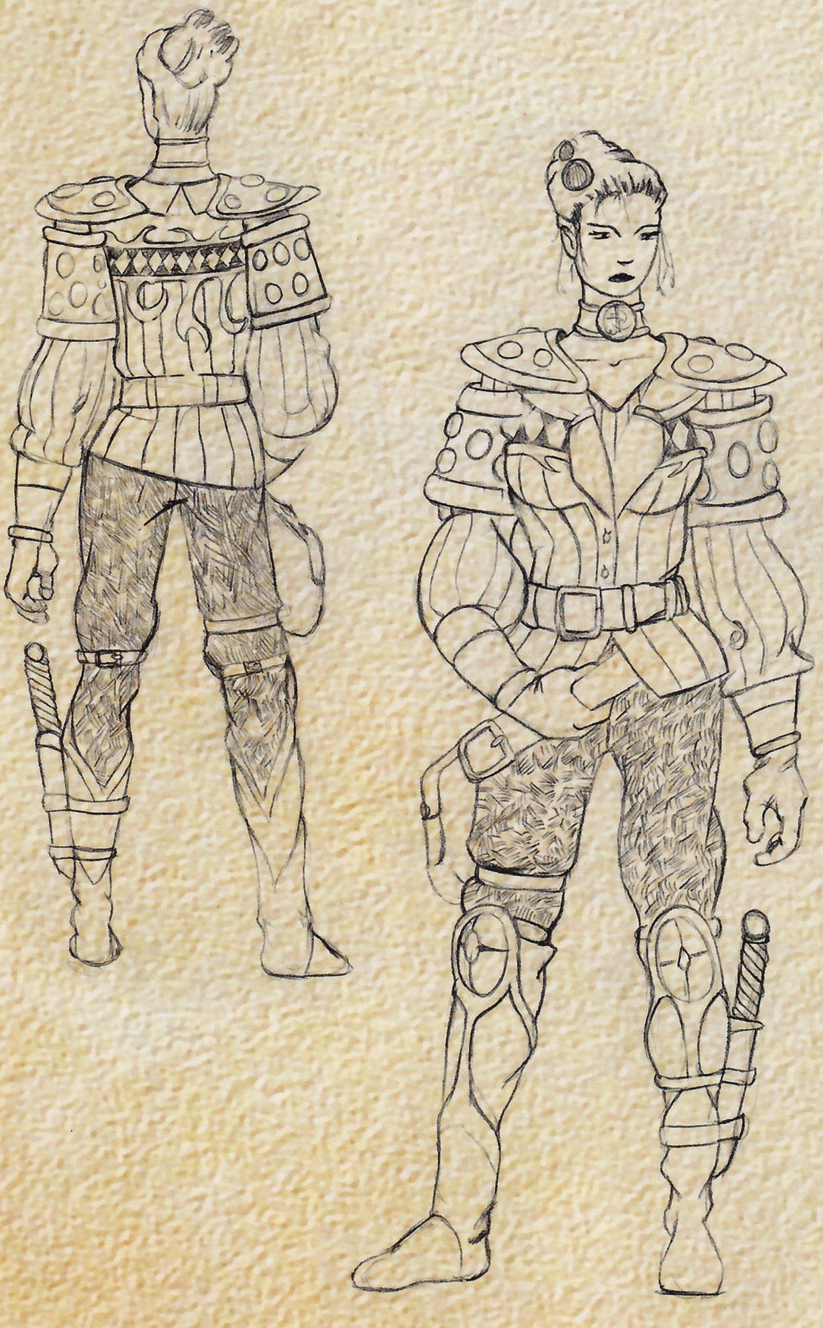






Sedos Sebille

Once a rough-and-tumble youth amidst the crowds of Waterdeep, then a fierce adventurer in the snowy Sword Mountain peaks, Sedos Sebille appears to have found a home, at last, in Neverwinter. There, she is a trusted member of Lord Nasher's personal bodyguard, the Neverwinter Nine, bearing her responsibilities with a grace that would surprise old friends.











MONSTERS

Monsters are the lifeblood of a Dungeons & Dragons adventure, and the sheer variety available in Neverwinter Nights is staggering. From goblins and skeletons to dragons, umber hulks, and fearsome demons, the monsters of Neverwinter Nights are enough to take on any adventuring party.

The challenge for monster artists was similar to that faced by the character artists: how to meet the expectations of the Dungeons & Dragons and fantasy fan base, while adding something new and fresh to familiar opponents.

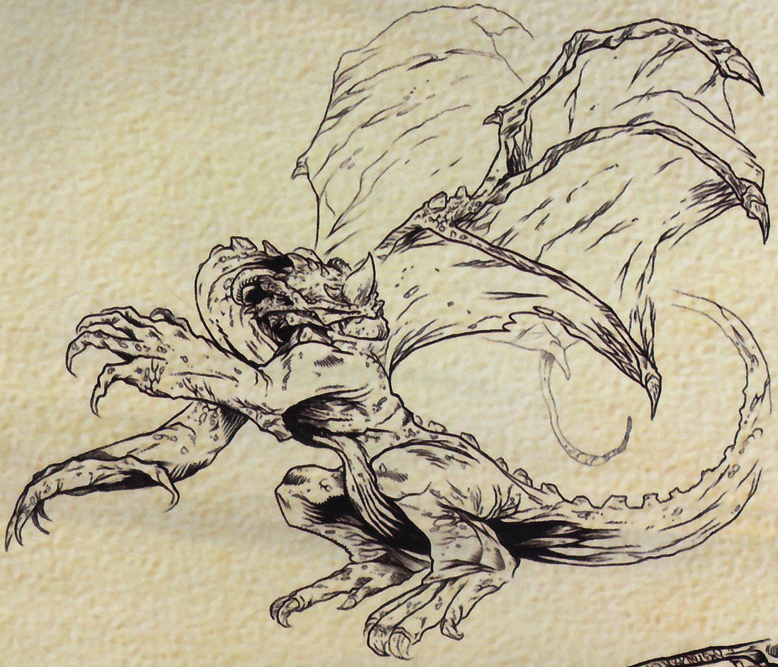
New monsters are being introduced to the world of Neverwinter Nights all the time, both from the BioWare development team, and from the huge fan community. Since the game's launch, fans have created their own versions of many new monsters, including the famed beholder, or eye tyrant, and the diminutive kobold.

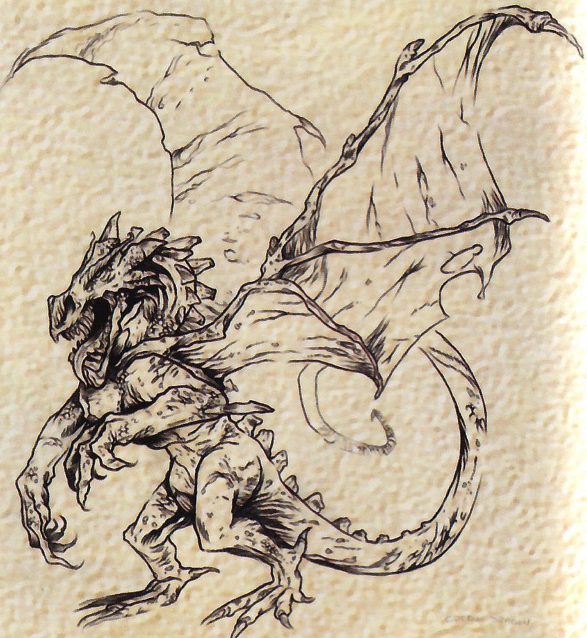


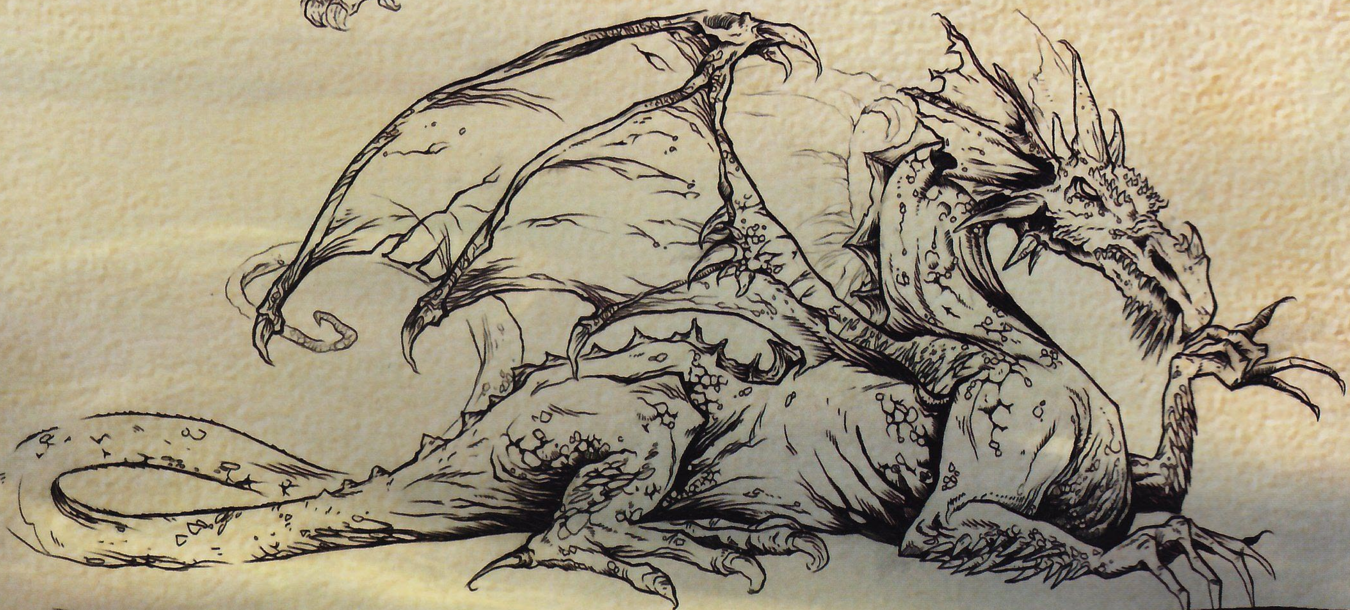
Dragons



RED DRAGON







FROST DRAGON.



Balor







Minotaur









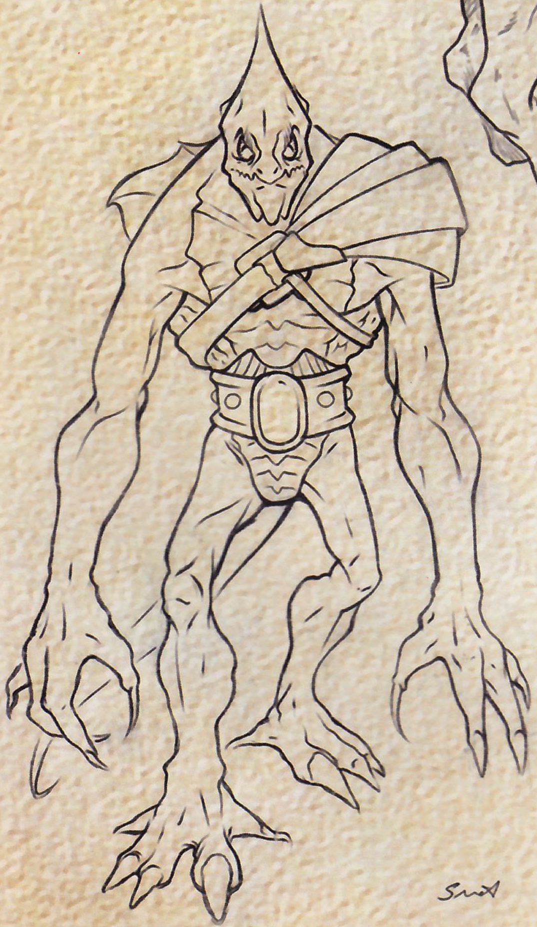




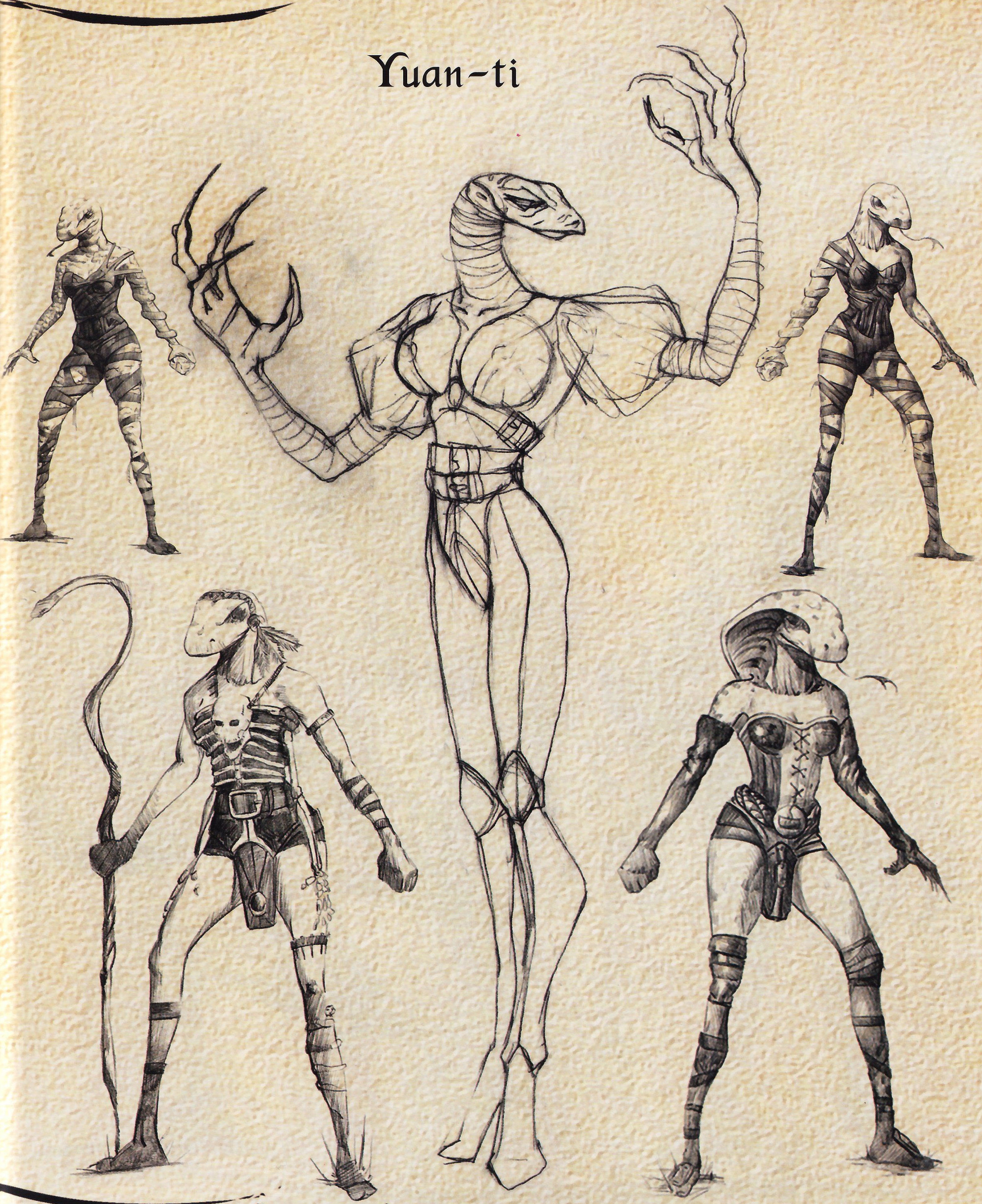
Lizardfolk







Yuan-ti



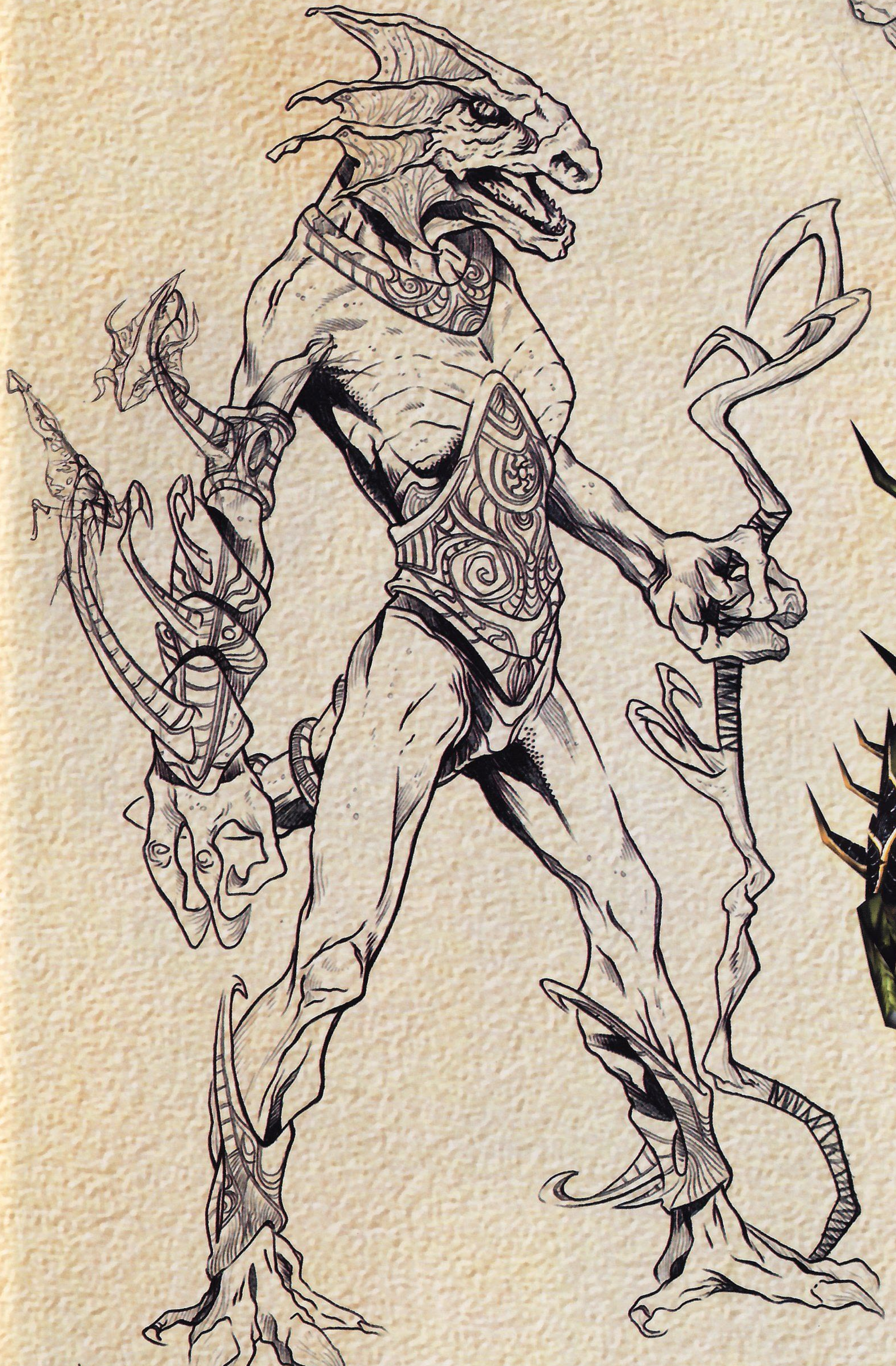
Haedraline

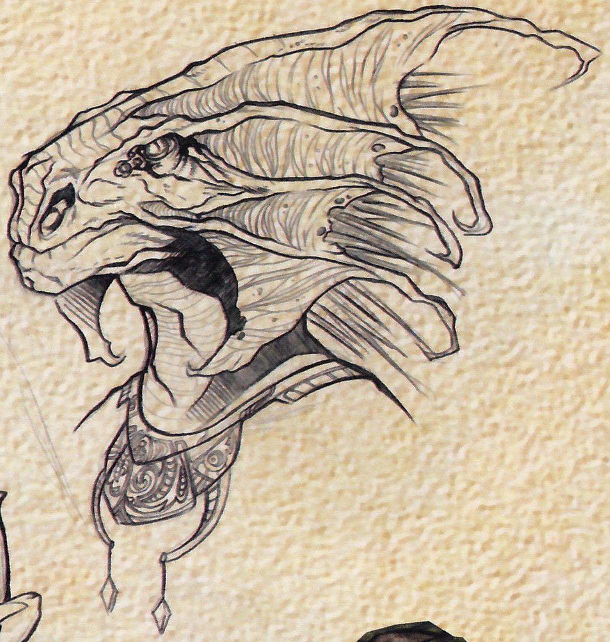






Morag













Bugbear





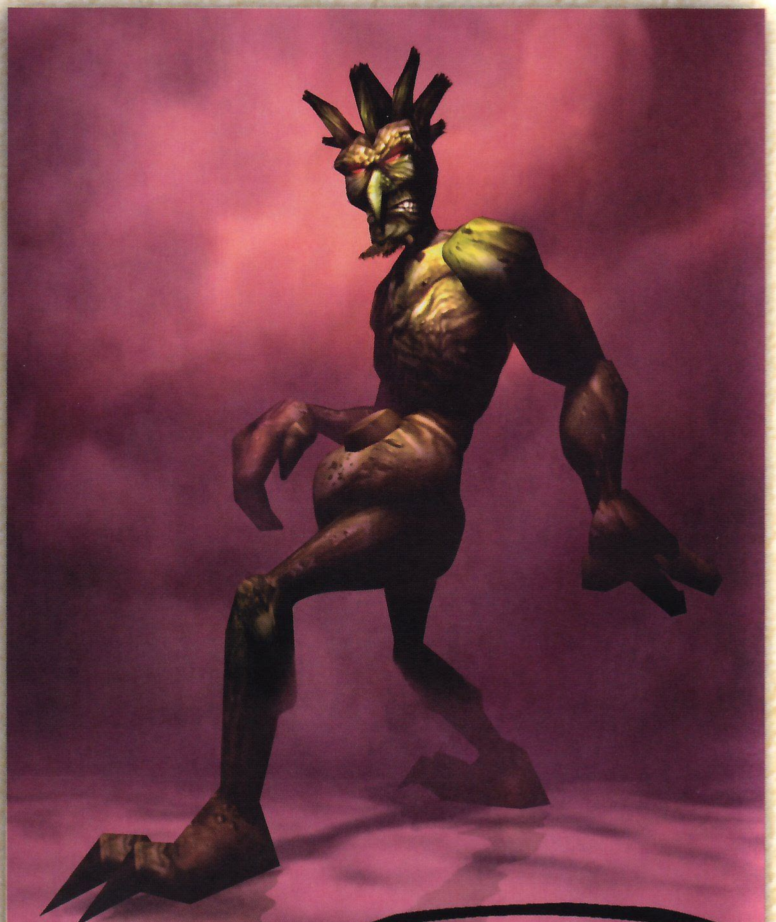
Slaad





Troll









Umber Hulk



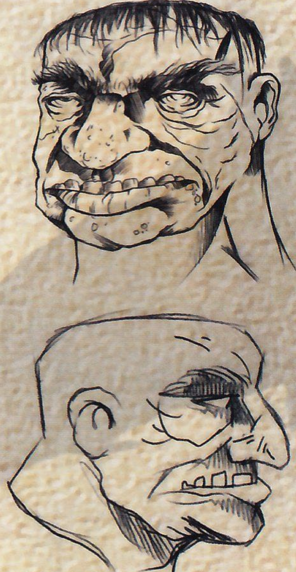


Werewolf



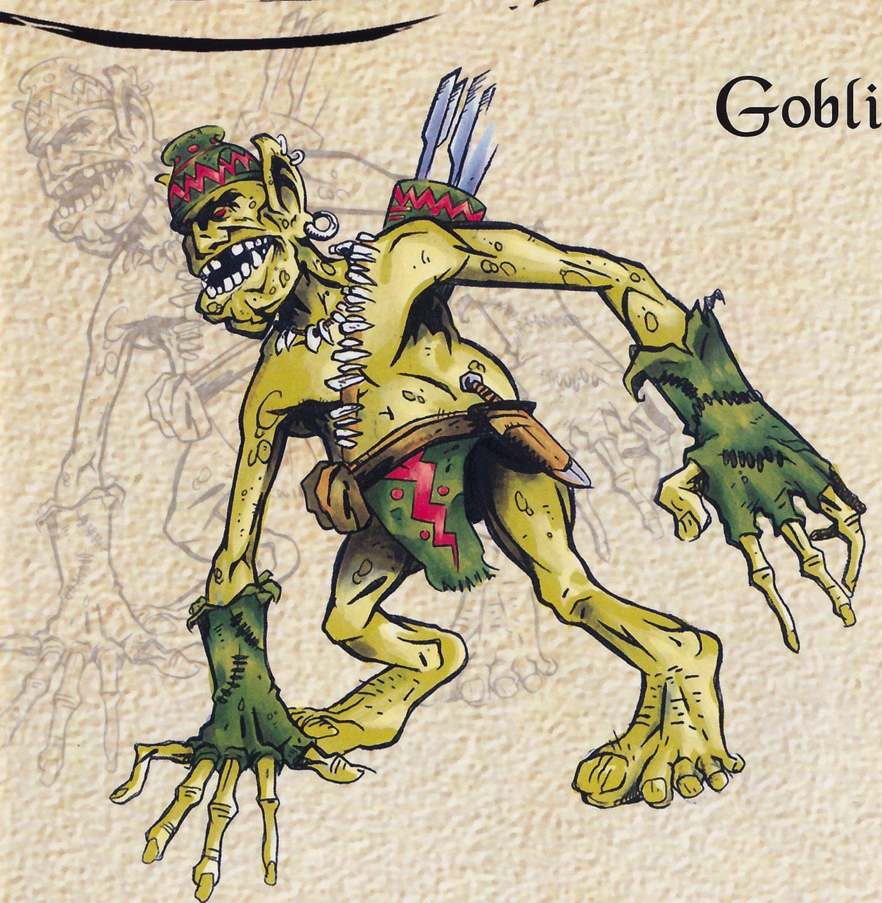
Ettin



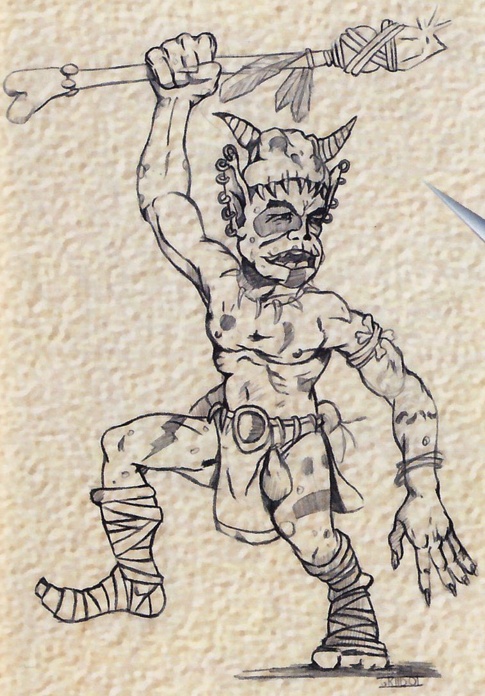


Ogre

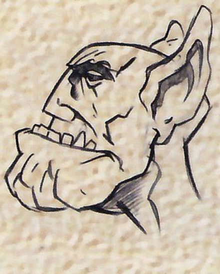
Goblin





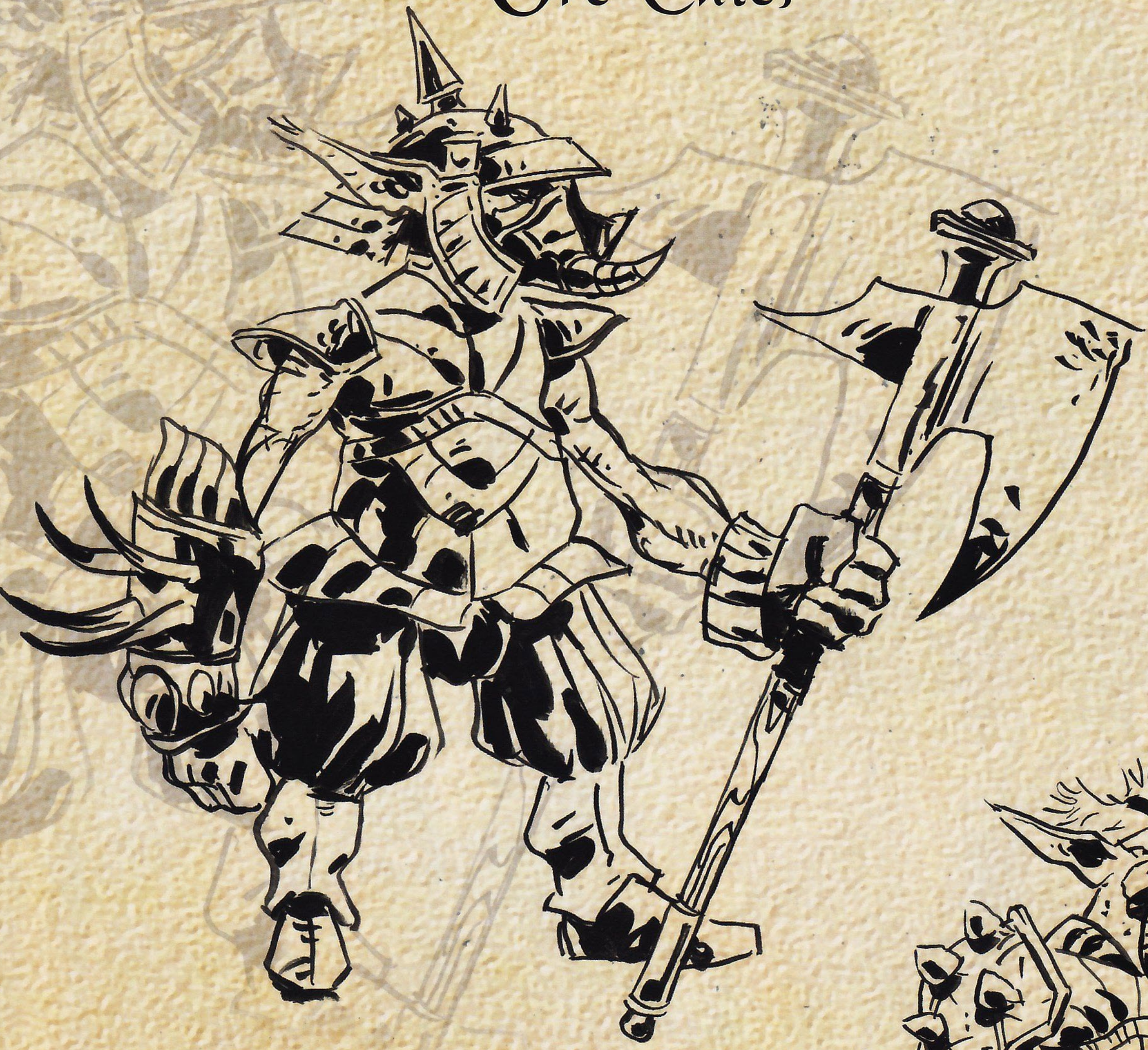








Orc Chief



Orc

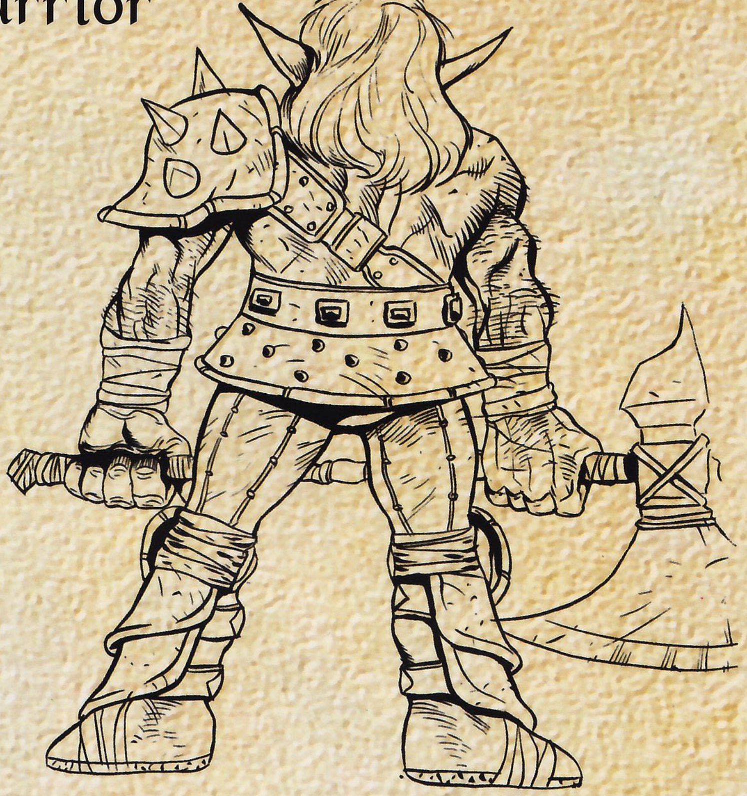




Orc Shamen

Orcs Warrior





Orc Shamen





Battle Devourer



Skeletal Devourer

Spirit of the woods

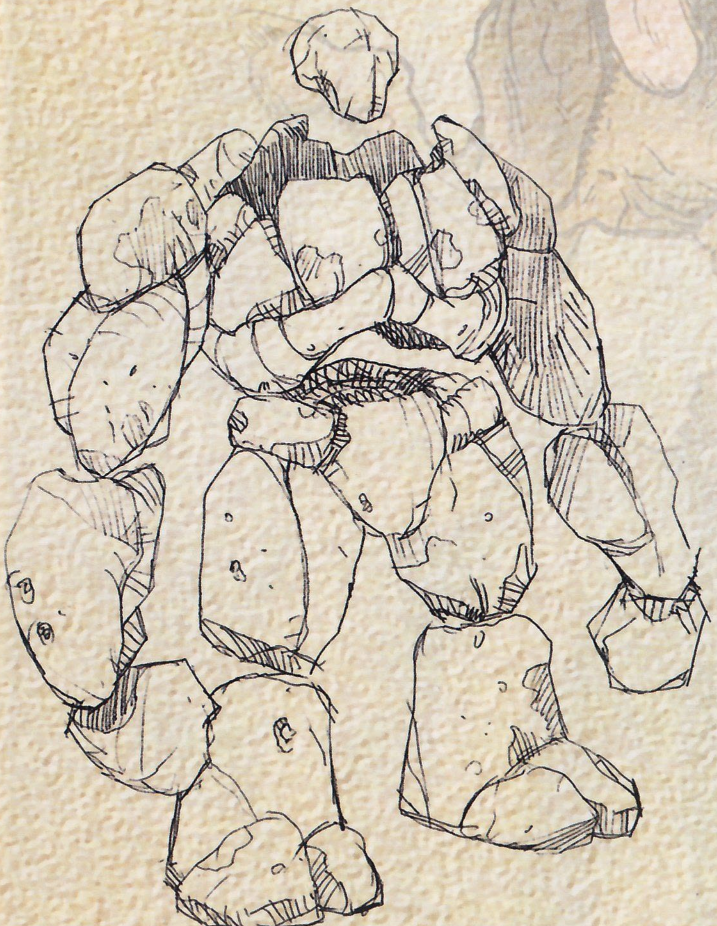




Flesh Golem



Stone Golem





Siege Golem

Water Elemental





Shield Guardian



Siren

Succubus



Helm Horror



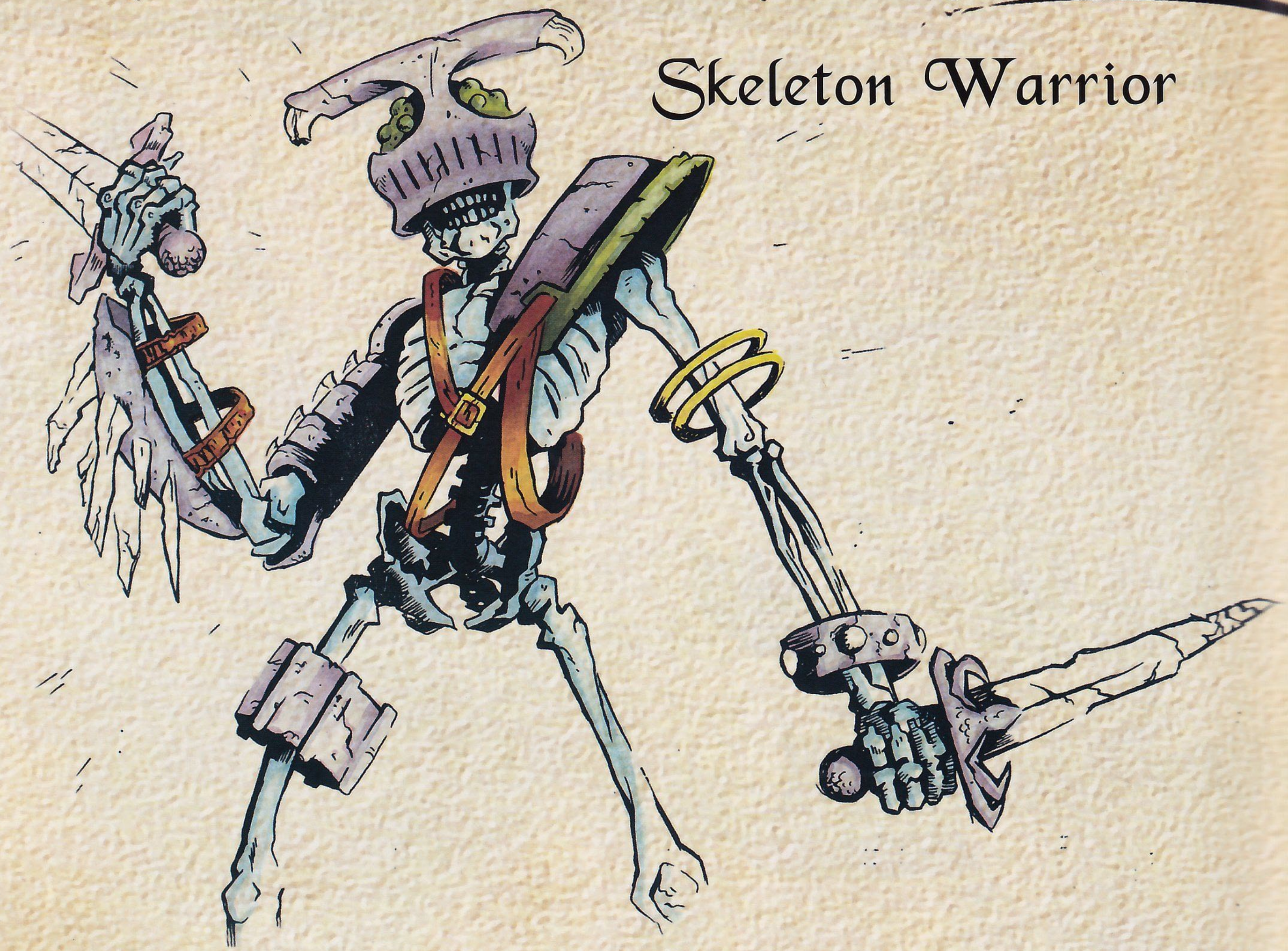
Doom Knight







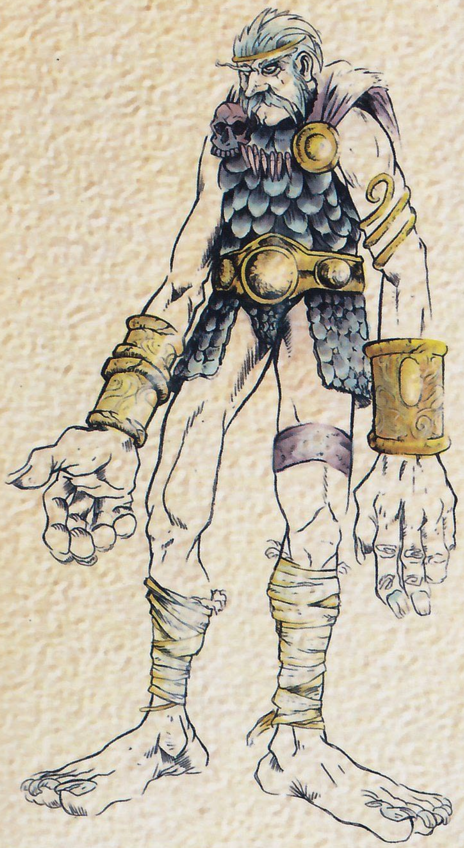
Skeleton Warrior

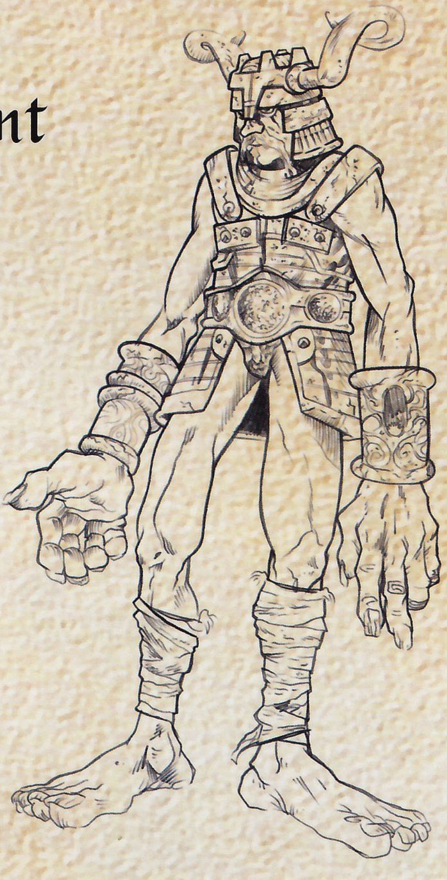


Old One Guardian Golem



Frost Giant





Dire Animals





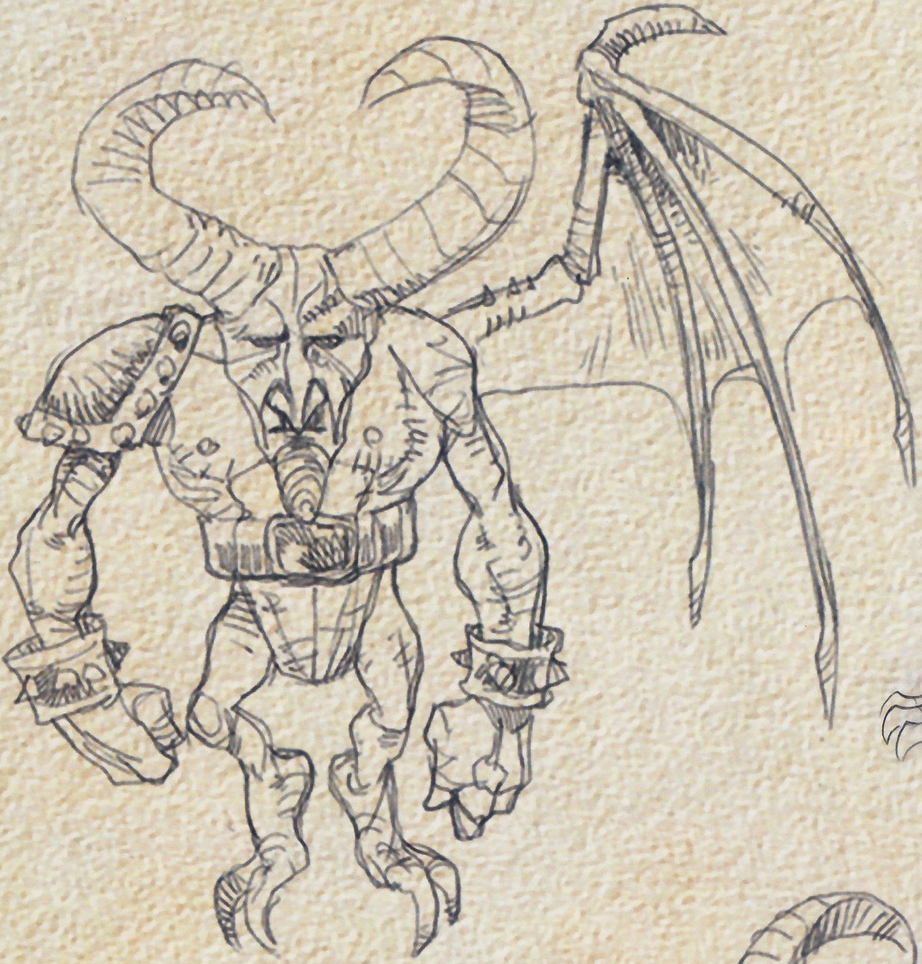
DireBear


Mummy





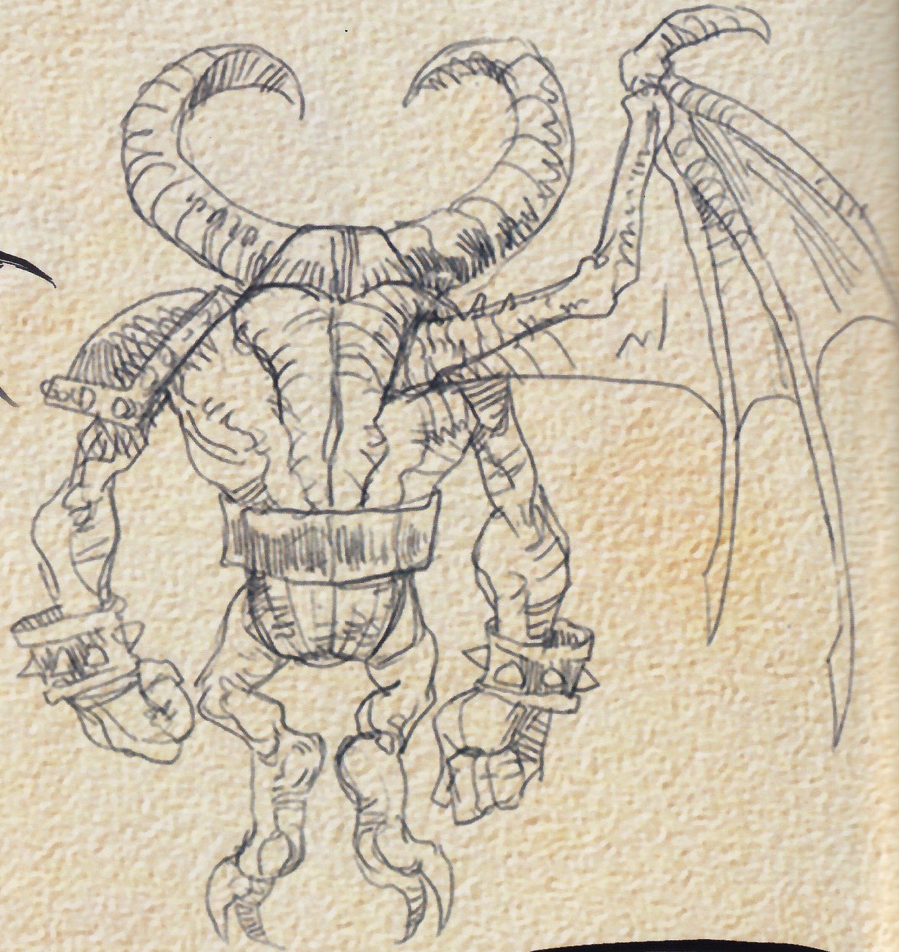




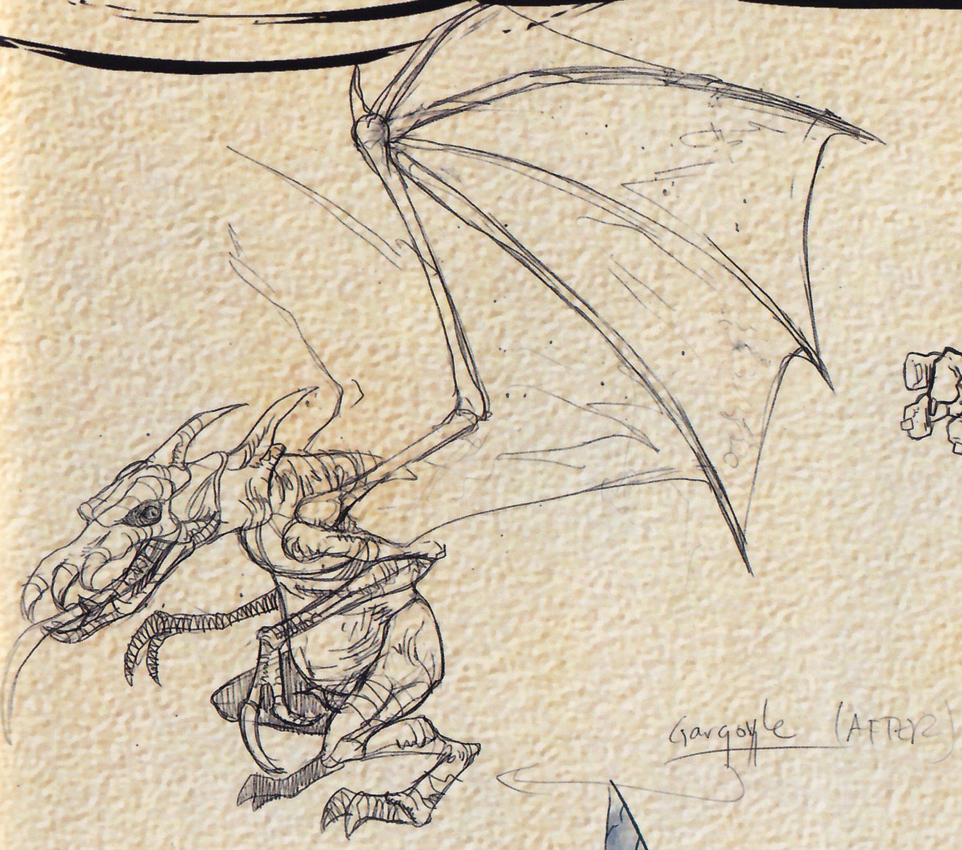
Imp







Gargoyle





Kobold



Wererat



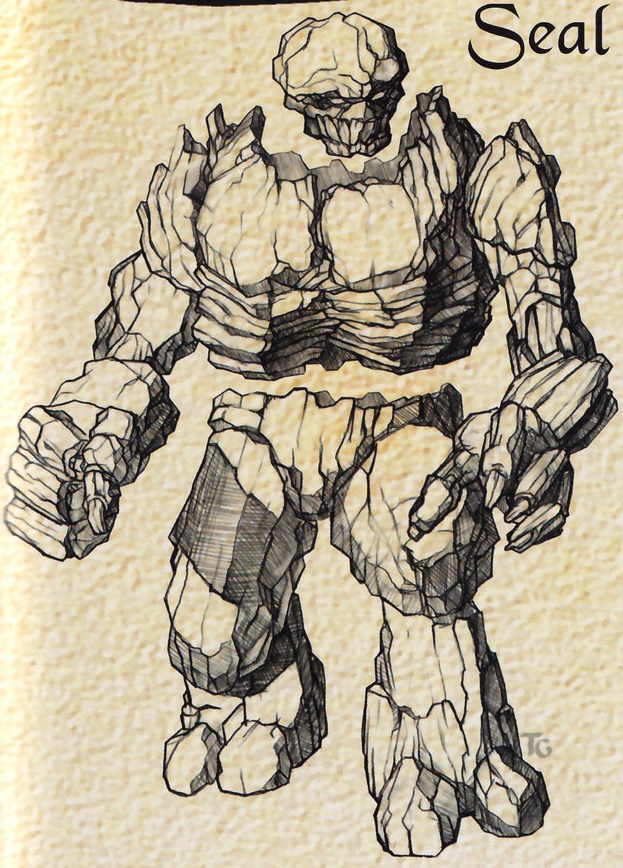


Giant Spider

Nameless

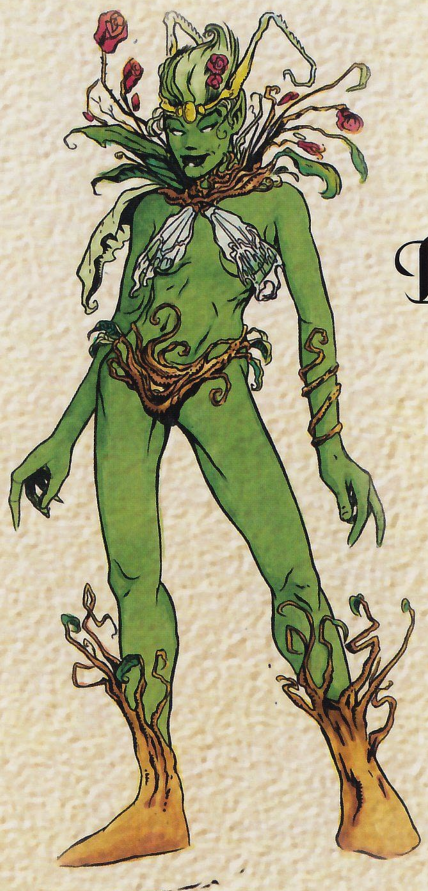


Seal Guardian Golem





Battle Horror



Dryad



PORTRAITS

These small images may be the most important art of the game. They must be instantly recognizable to the player, attractive, and distinctive, all without going against the look and feel of Dungeons & Dragons. These portraits more than any other single piece of art represent a player's character, and archetypal images of the arcane sorcerer, sneaky rogue, and battle-hardened fighter had to be created, alongside less-traditional images of dwarven mages and halfling warriors.

Portrait artists were encouraged to take risks and be creative, and to paint portraits of characters that they would personally want to play.



SKETCHES

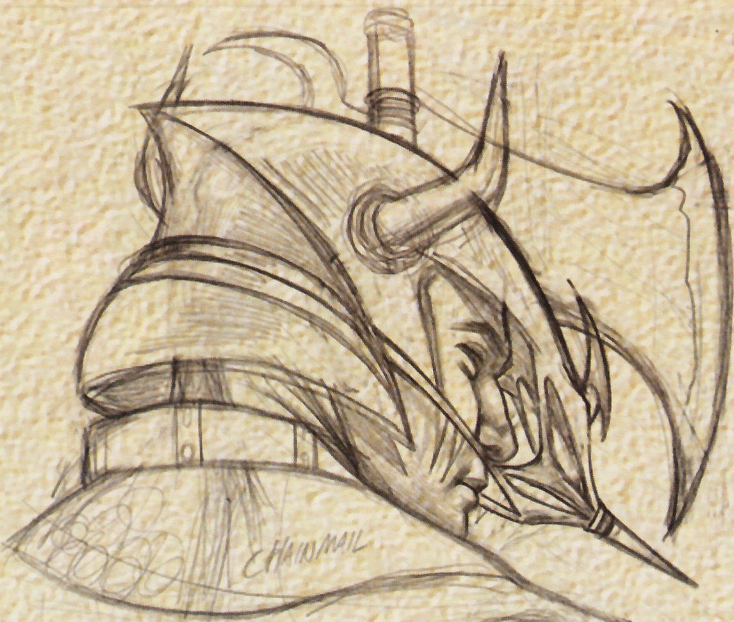




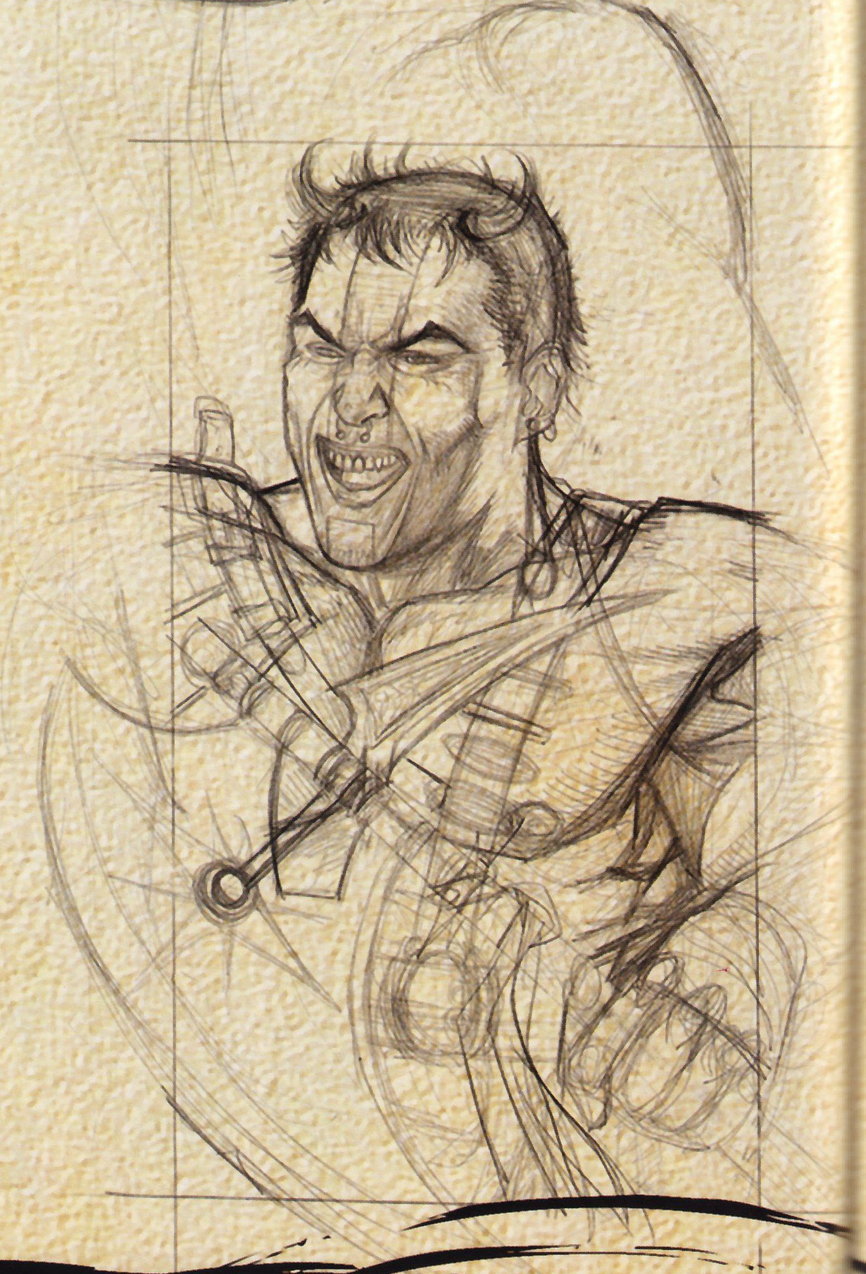







CHAINMAIL







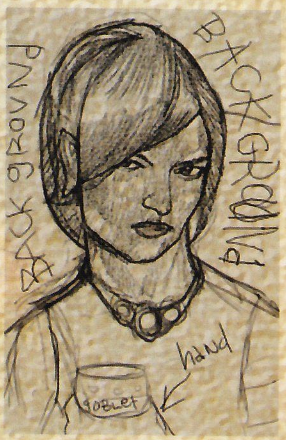




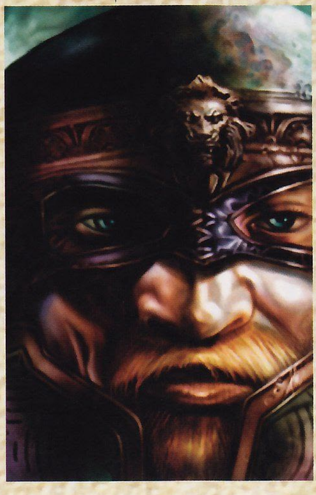
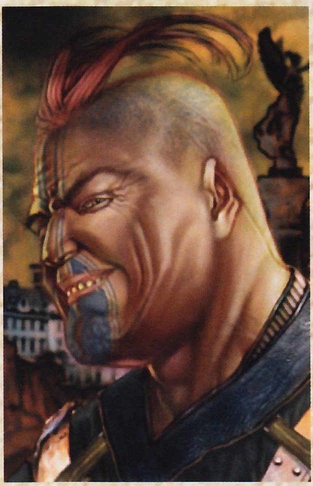
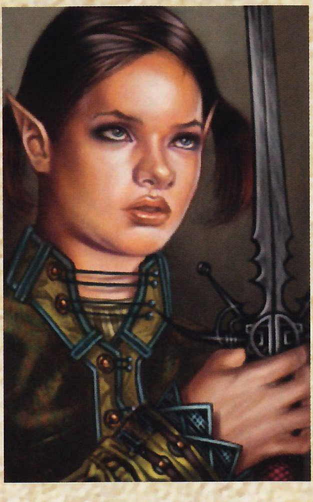


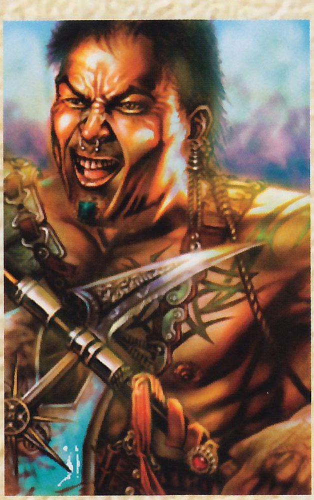
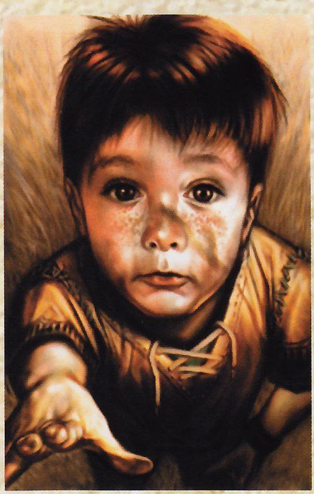
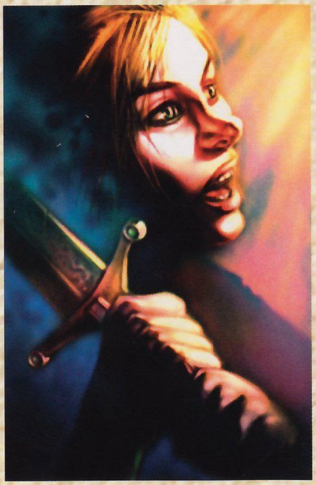
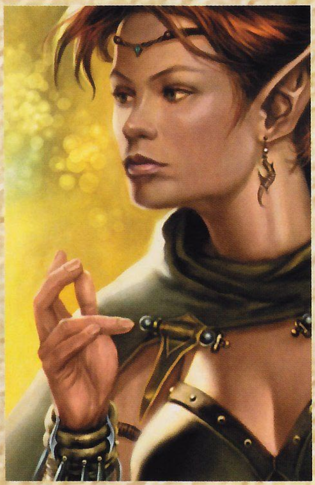
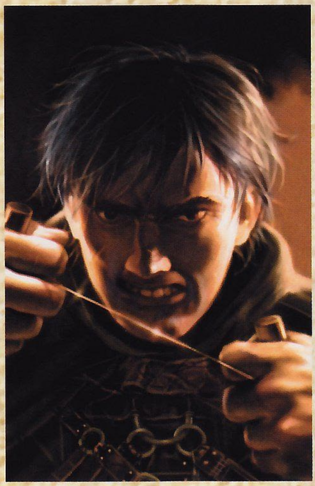
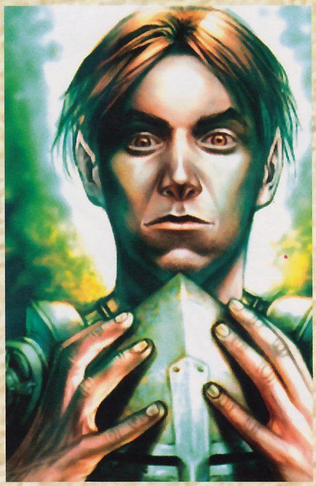


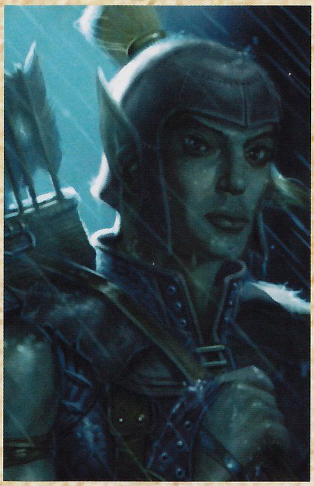
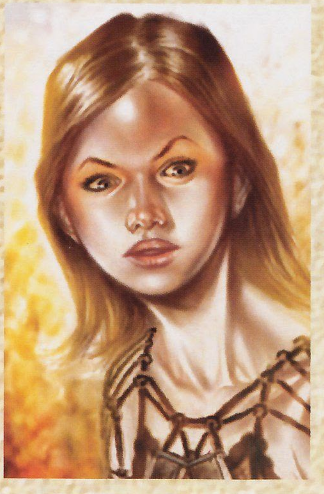


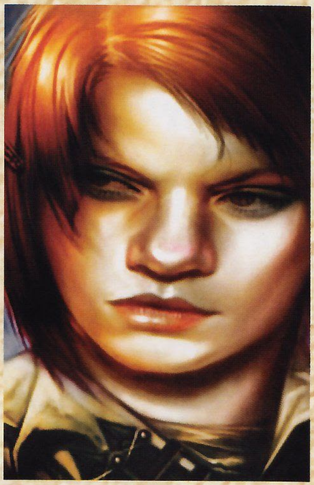
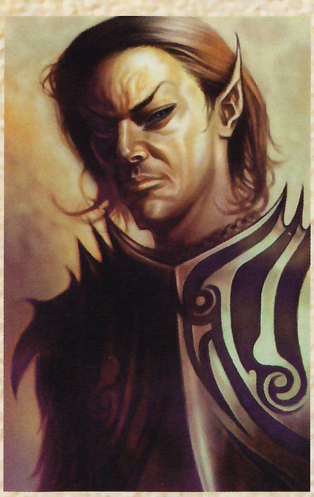
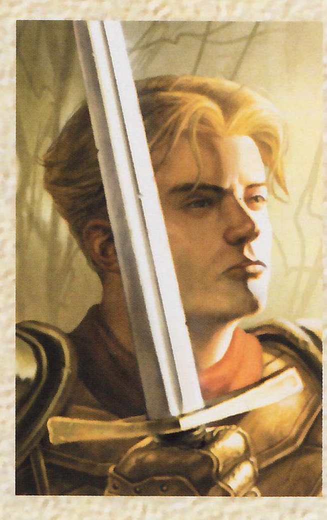
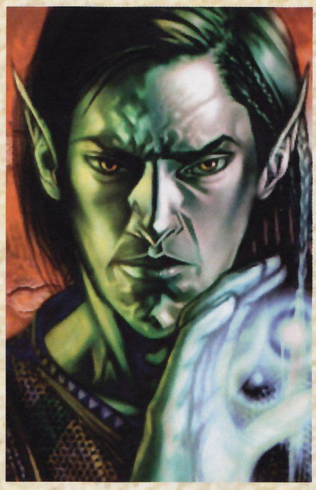
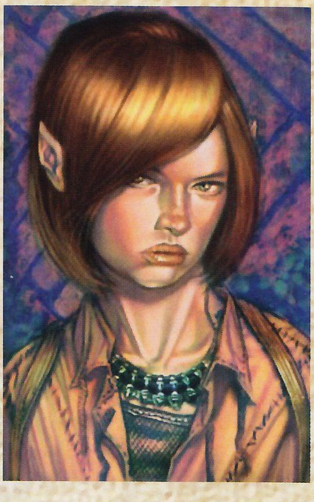
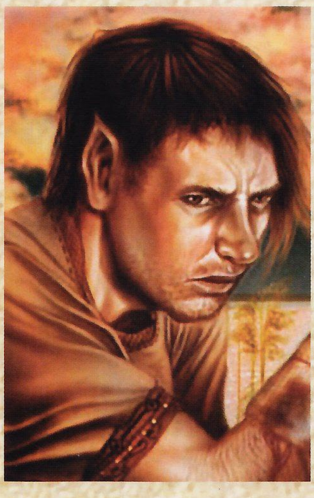

Background
BACKGROUND
hand
GOBLET

CHARACTERS

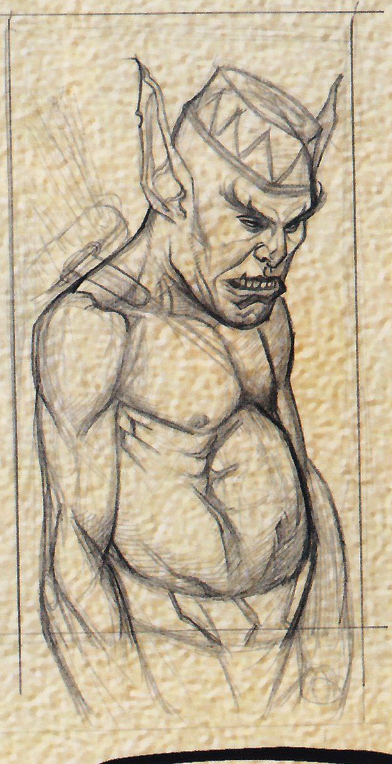







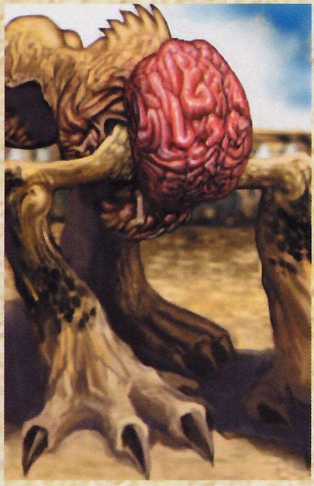


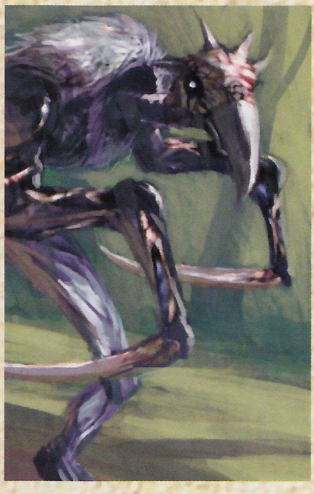
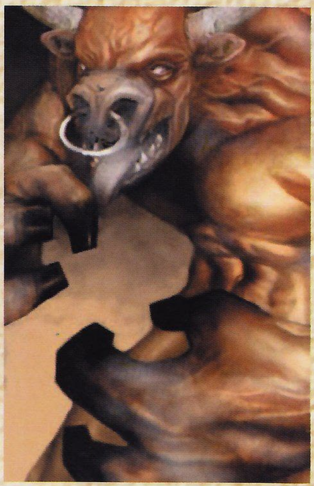
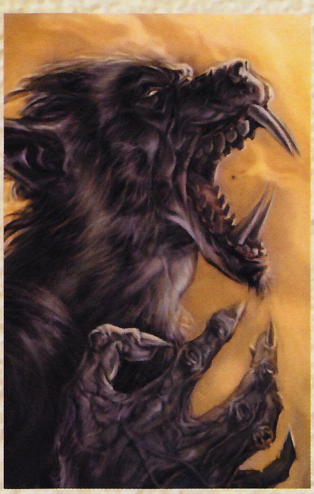

MONSTERS

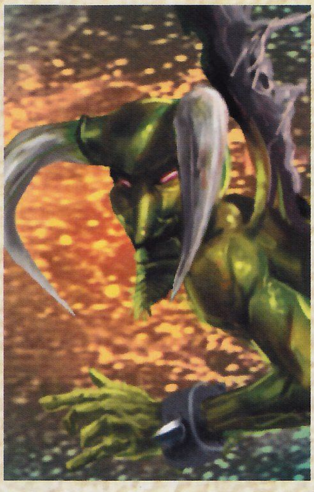


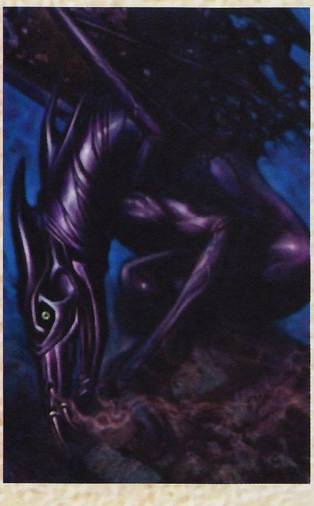










WORLD BUILDING

With nine full tilesets and hundreds of placeable objects, building the art that would become the world of Neverwinter Nights was a mammoth undertaking involving many rounds of concept art and thousands of hours of work.

Consistency was vital within each tileset, and every artist had to ensure that his or her work matched with the overall theme, and with other specific elements. The challenges of working within the framework of a tile-based system encouraged creative problem solving, and the game's incredible artwork is a testament to these artists' talent and hard work.

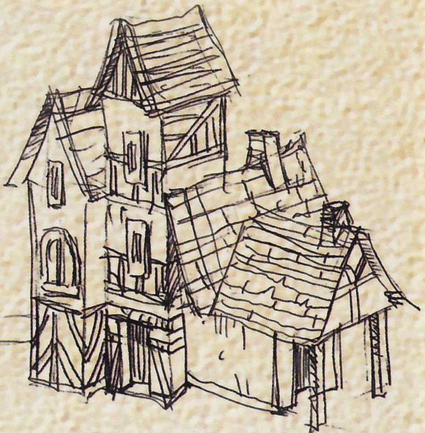


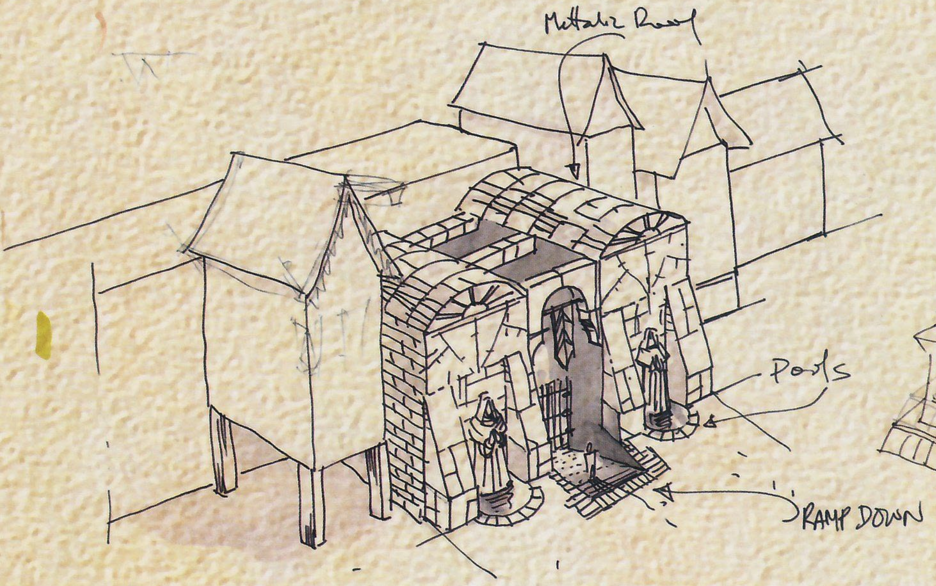
Precise
Map
of
Neverwinter
• City and Environs •
Spine of the World
Coldwood
Beorunna's Well
Moonwood
Homesteads
Ruins
Luskan
River Mirar
The Crags
Neverwinter Wood
Green Griffon Inn
North Road
Sea of Swords
North
West
East
South
East Road
Druid Camp
Port Llast
The Sword Coast
South Road
The Farms
Neverwinter
Haunted Forest
Charwood
Sword Mountains
Castle
The City Core
Trade of Blades
Hall of Justice
Clockstower
Moonstone Mask
Shining Knight
Docks
Blacklake
Seedy Tavern
Meldanen Estate
Silver Sails
Speaker's Corner
The City Core
Great Graveyard
The Prison
Shining Serpent
Temple of Helm
Penninsula
Beggar's Nest

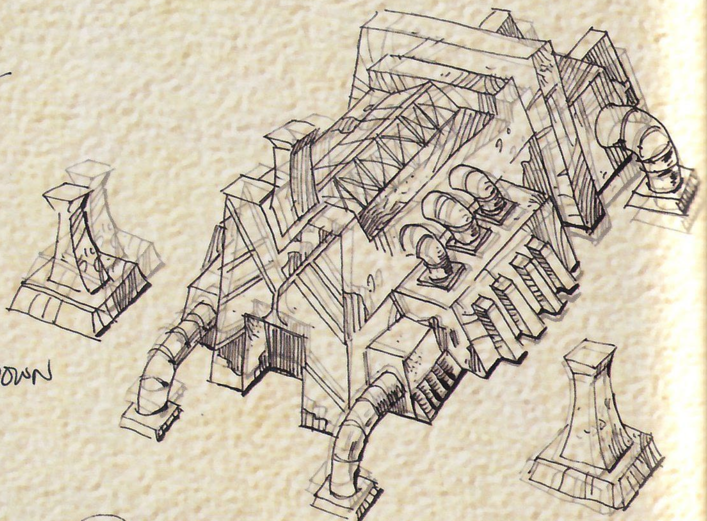
LANDSCAPES

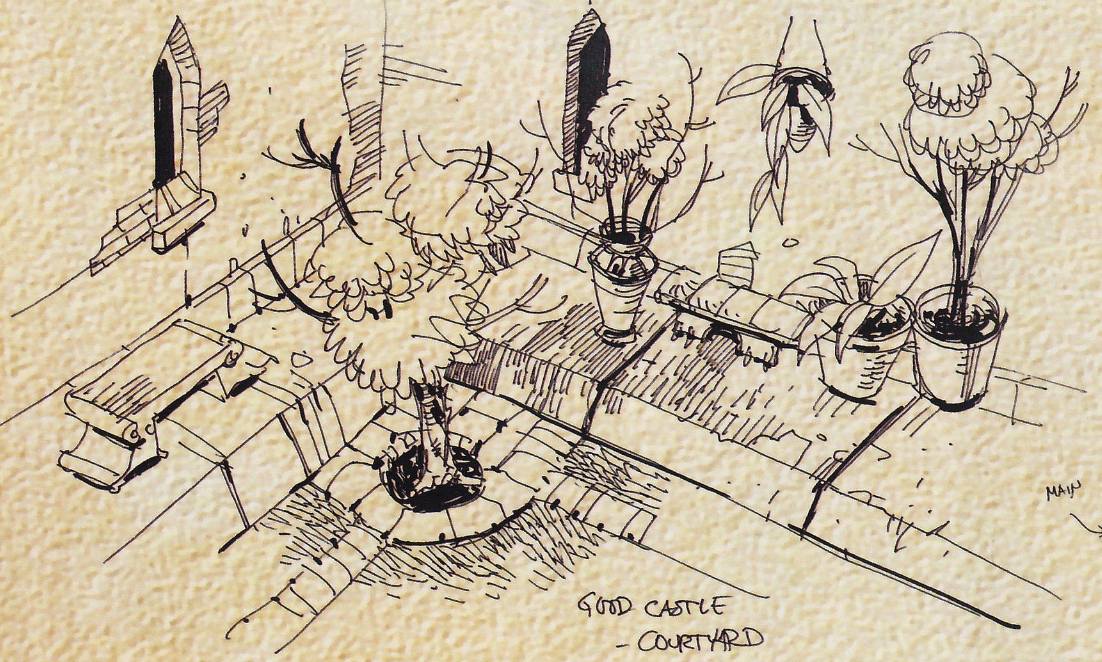
City

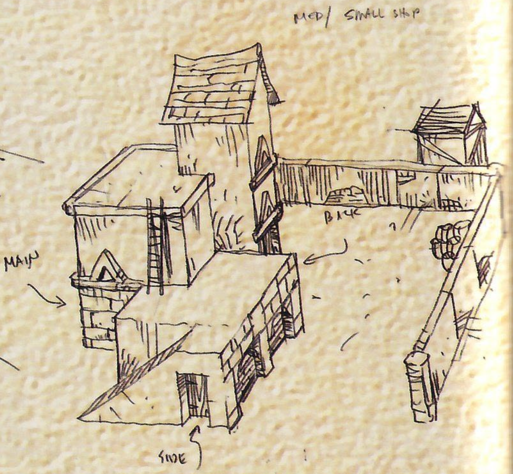
Our goal for the city was to create a style to the buildings that would let them be used for many different things. In this way, we decided that the buildings could look like additions were made at different times in their history. The result is that the buildings are almost patchwork-like in appearance, stitched together by simple carpentry.

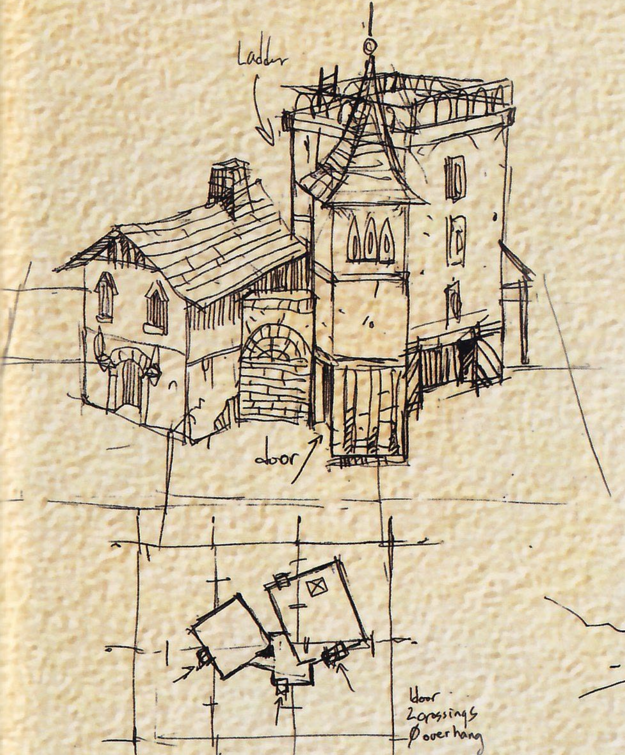


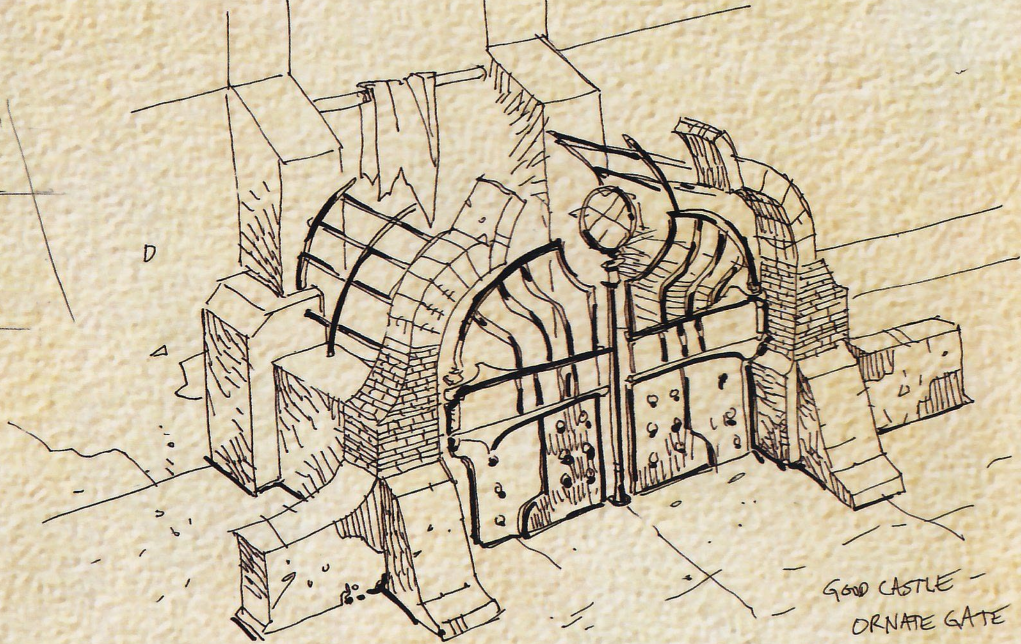


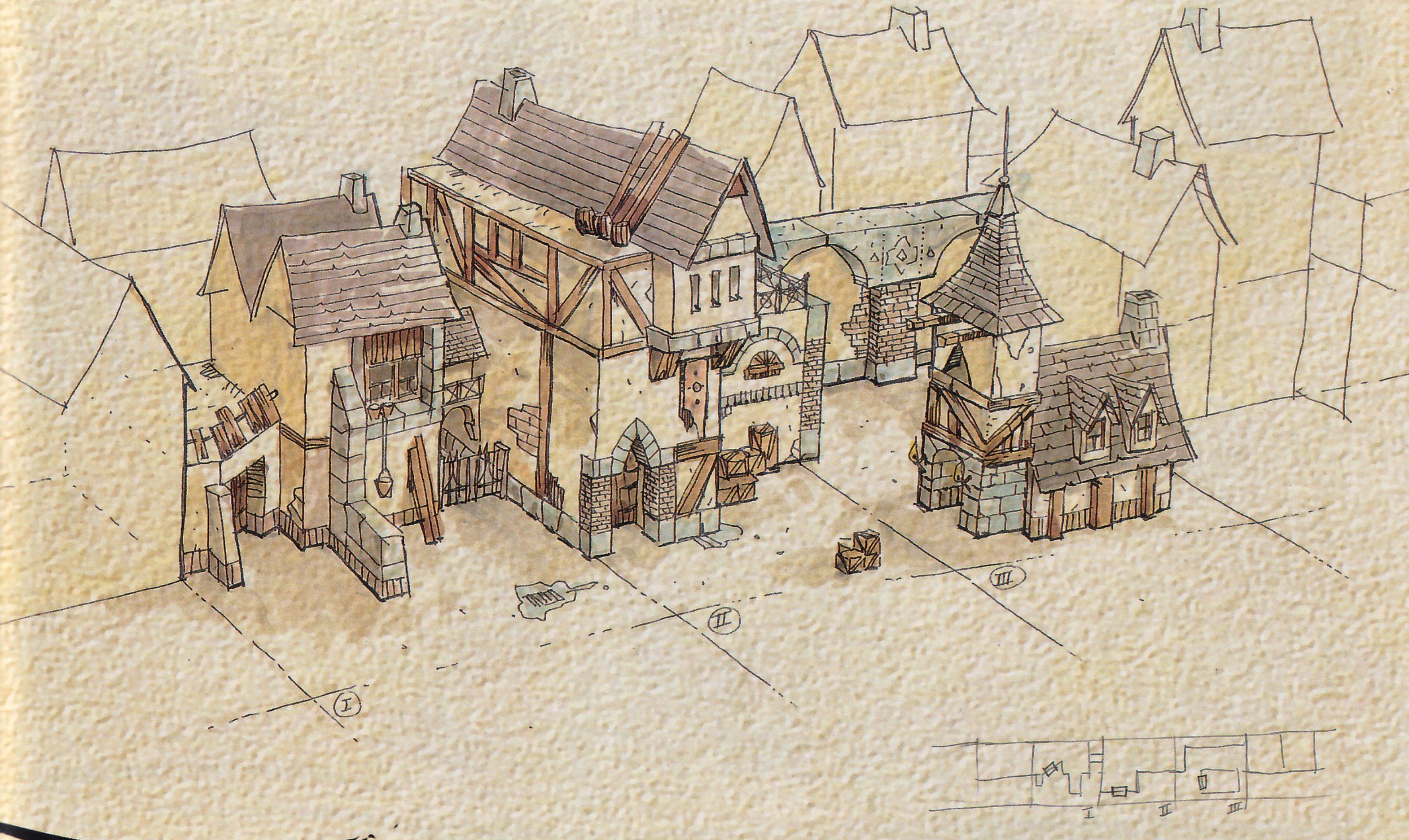


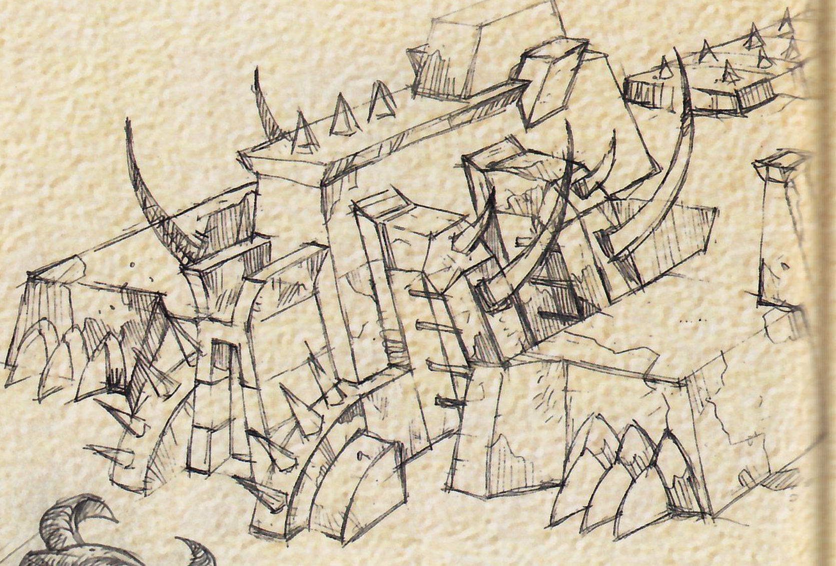


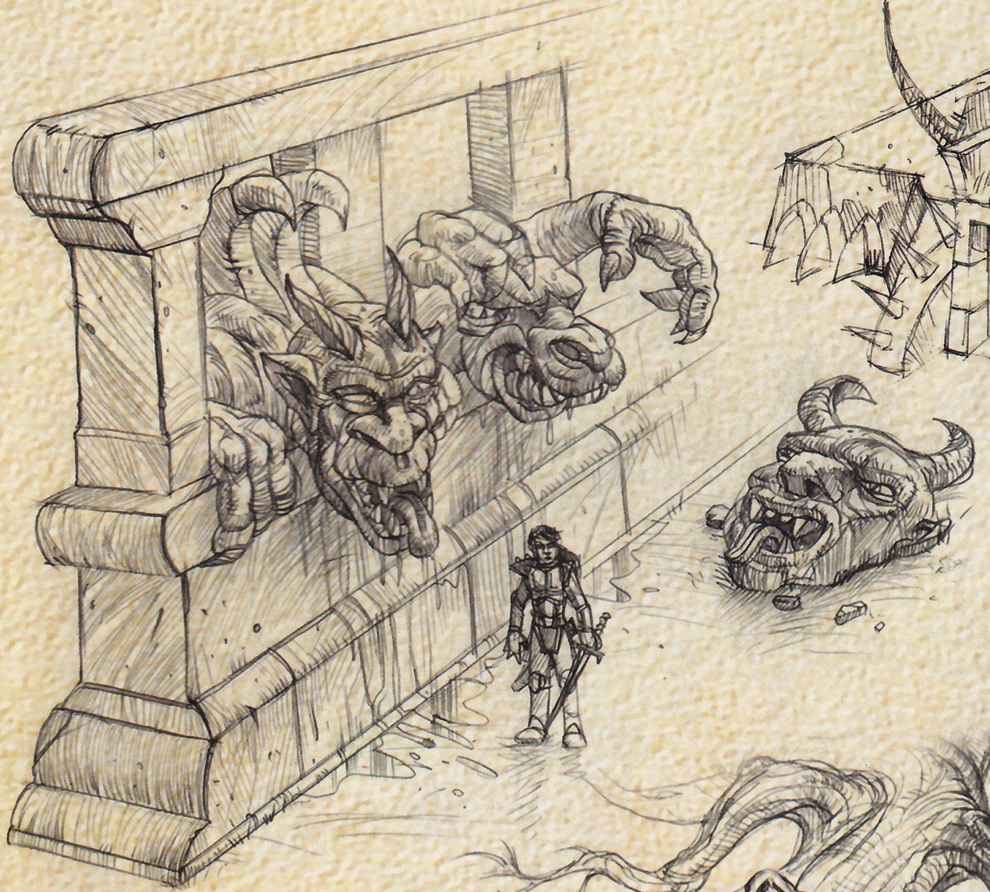



Ladder
door
door
2 crossings
∅ overhang

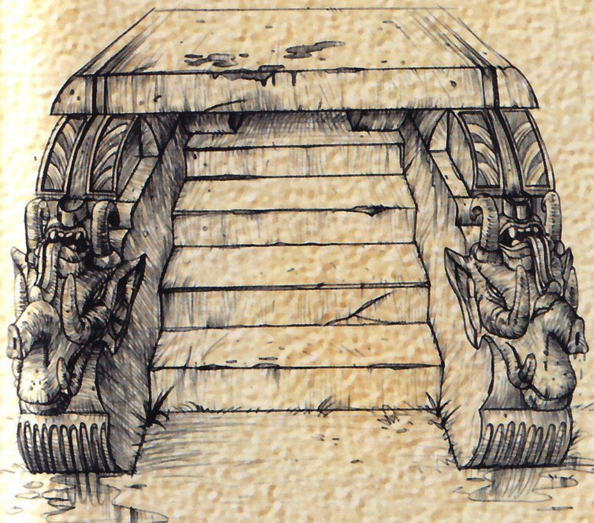

GOOD CASTLE
ORNATE GATE

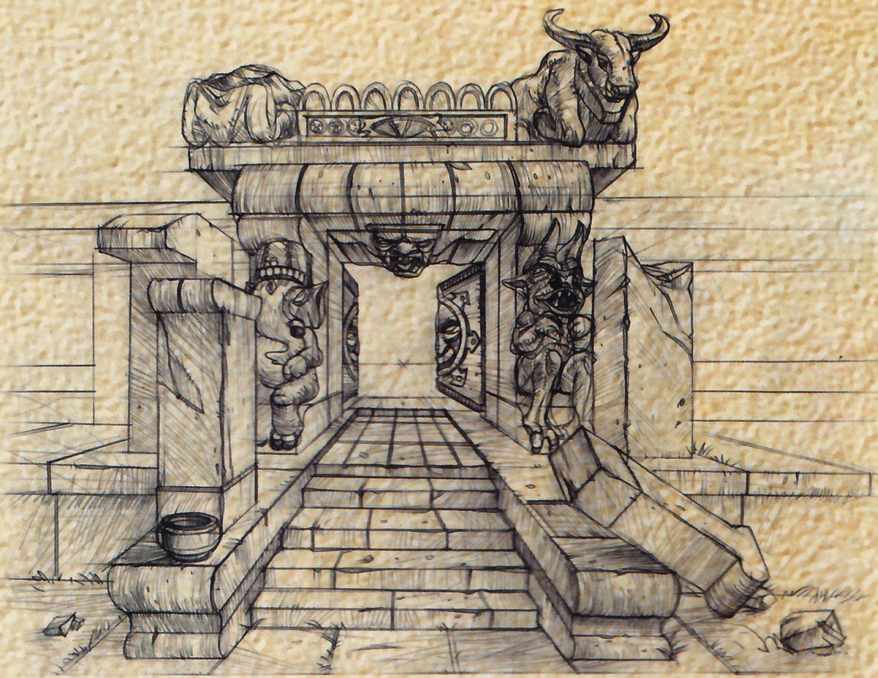

I
II
III

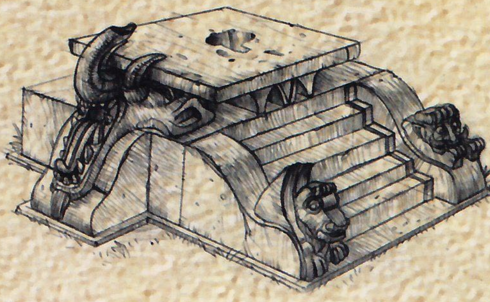


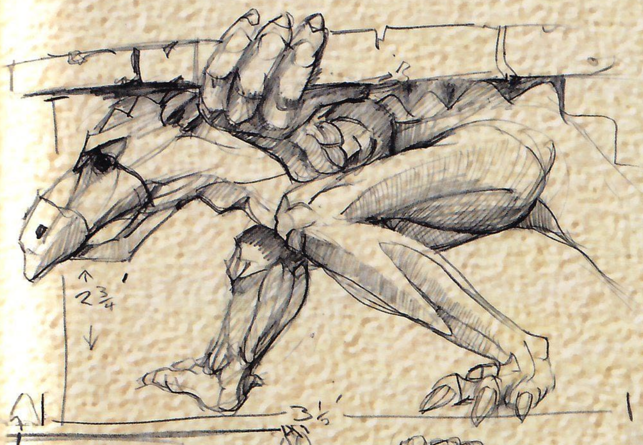




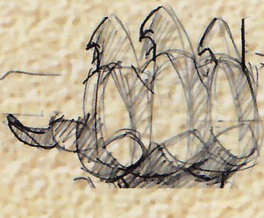






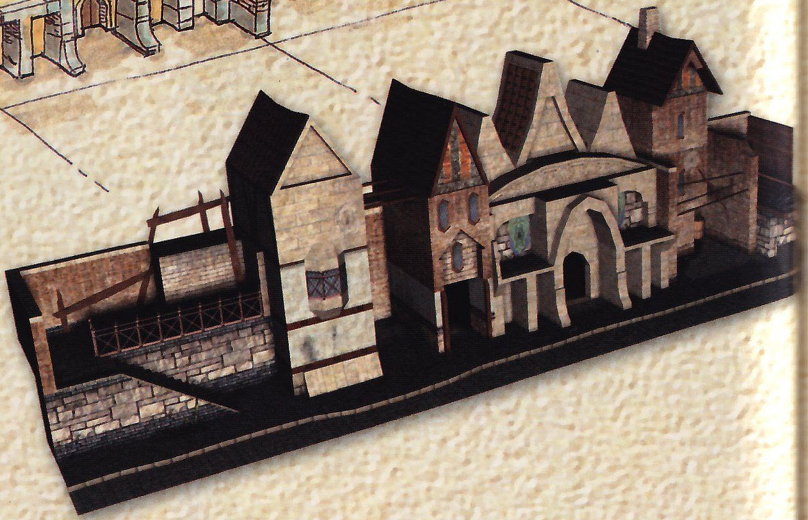


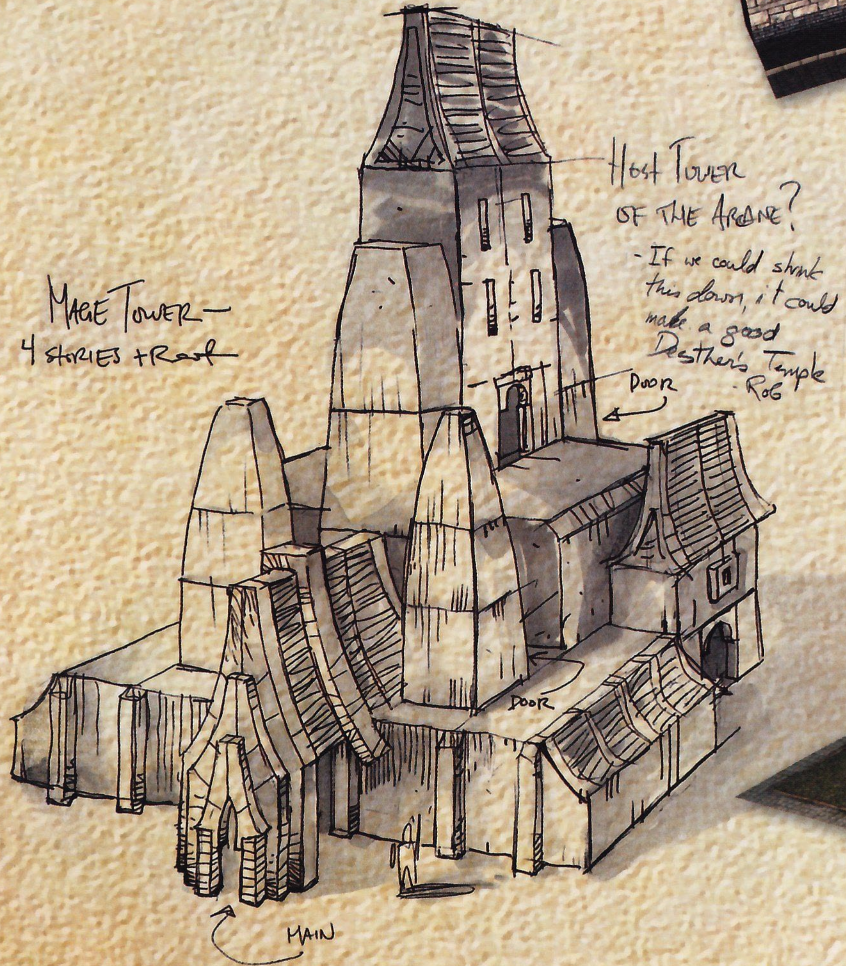




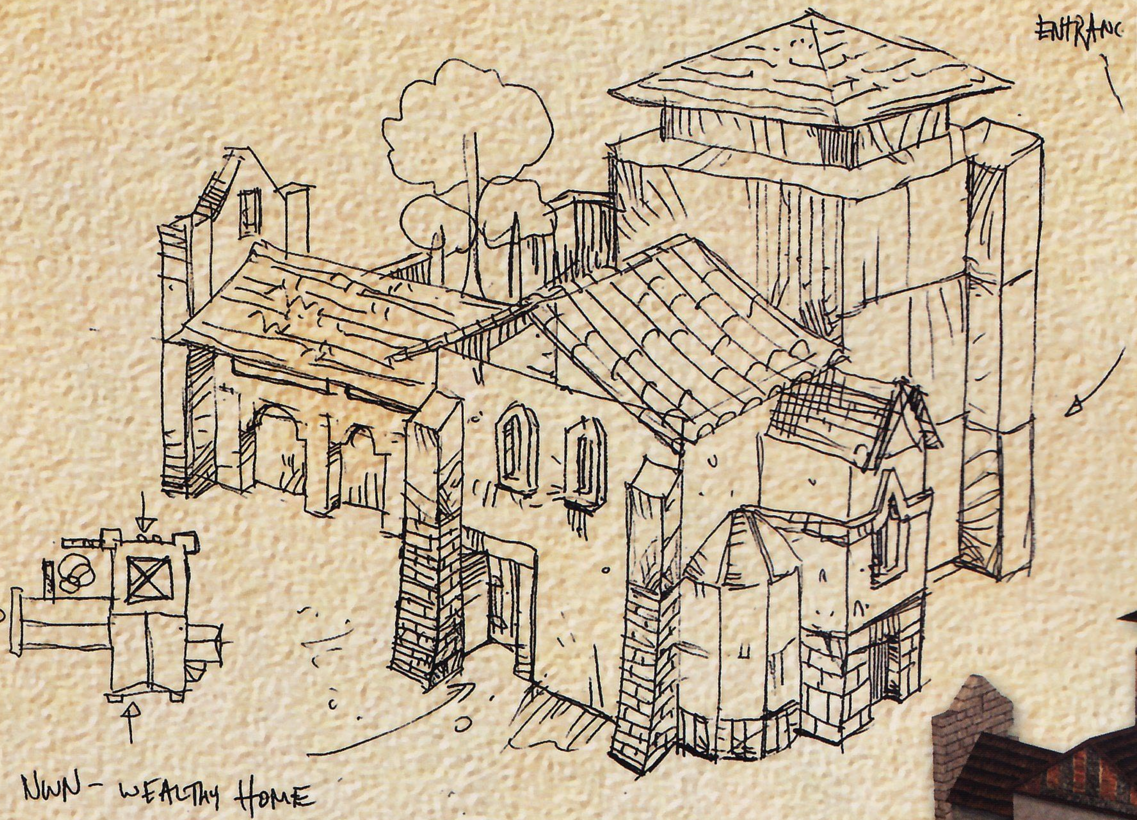


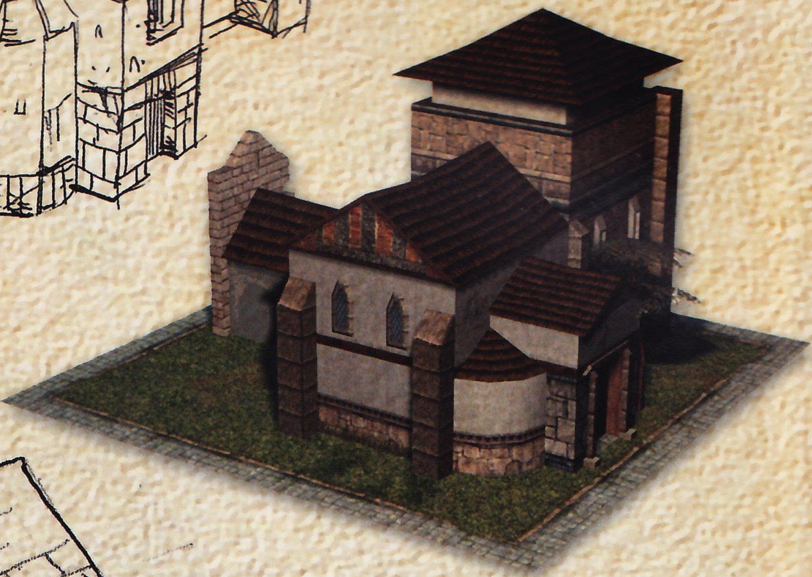


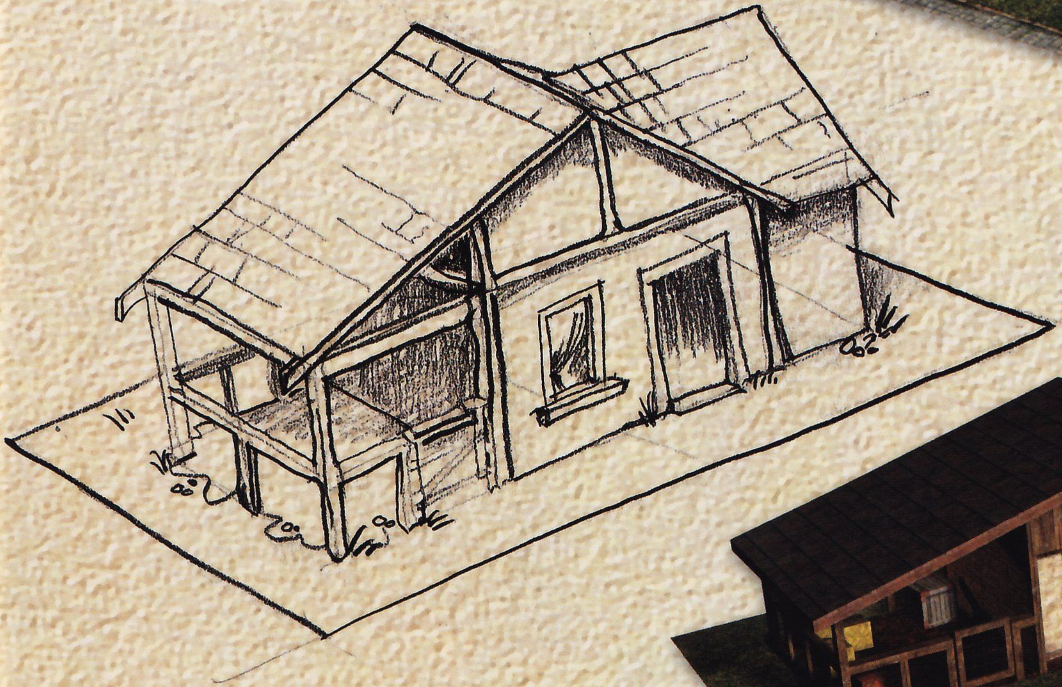



MAGE TOWER –
4 STORIES + ROOF
HOST TOWER
OF THE ARANE?
- If we could shrnk
this down, it could
make a good
Desther's Temple
- RoG
DOOR
DOOR
MAIN



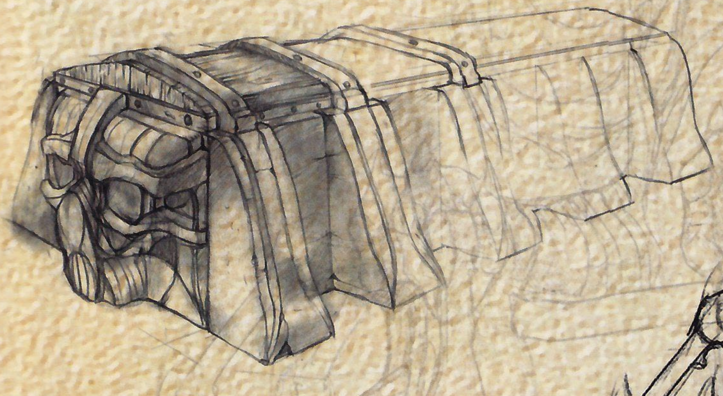

ENTRANC
NWN - WEALTHY HOME



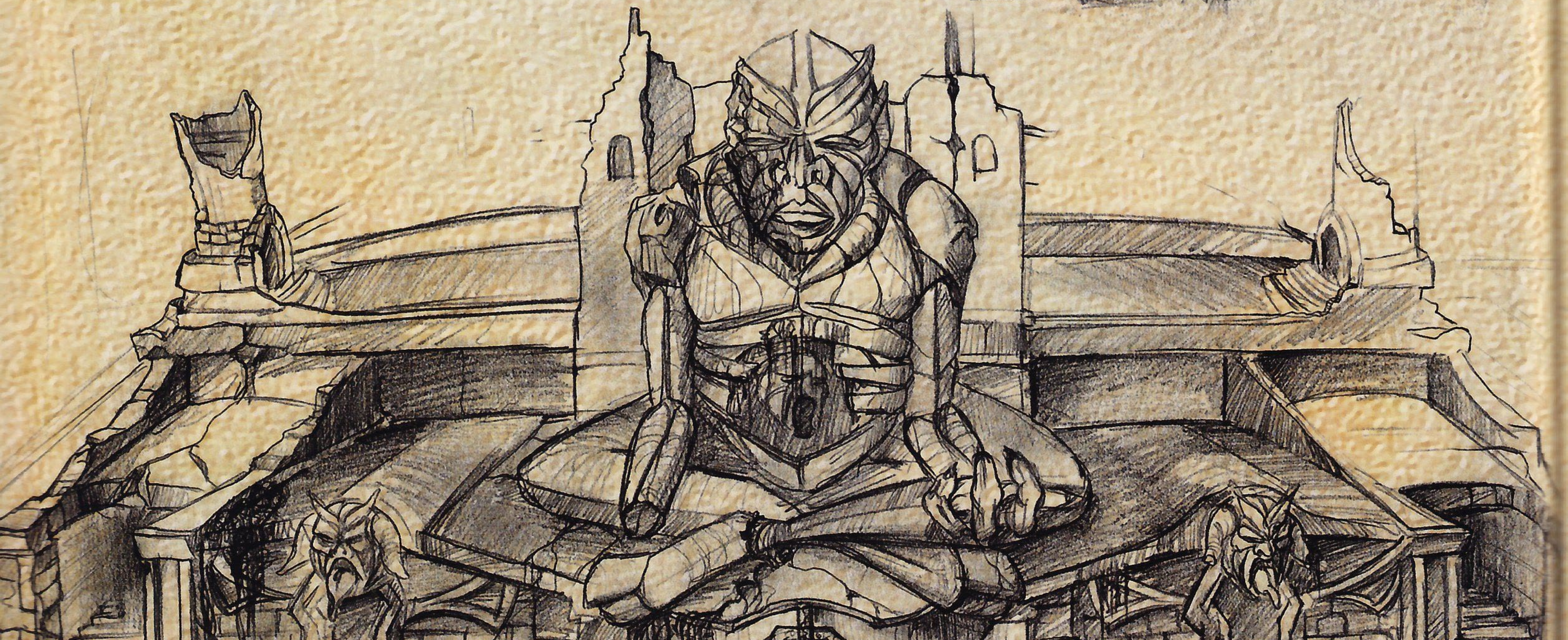


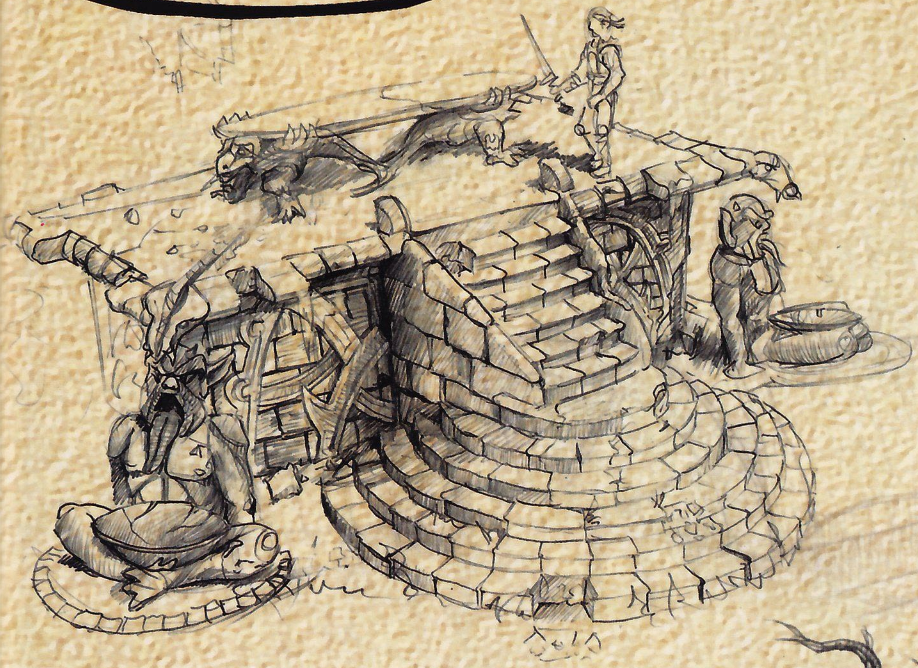


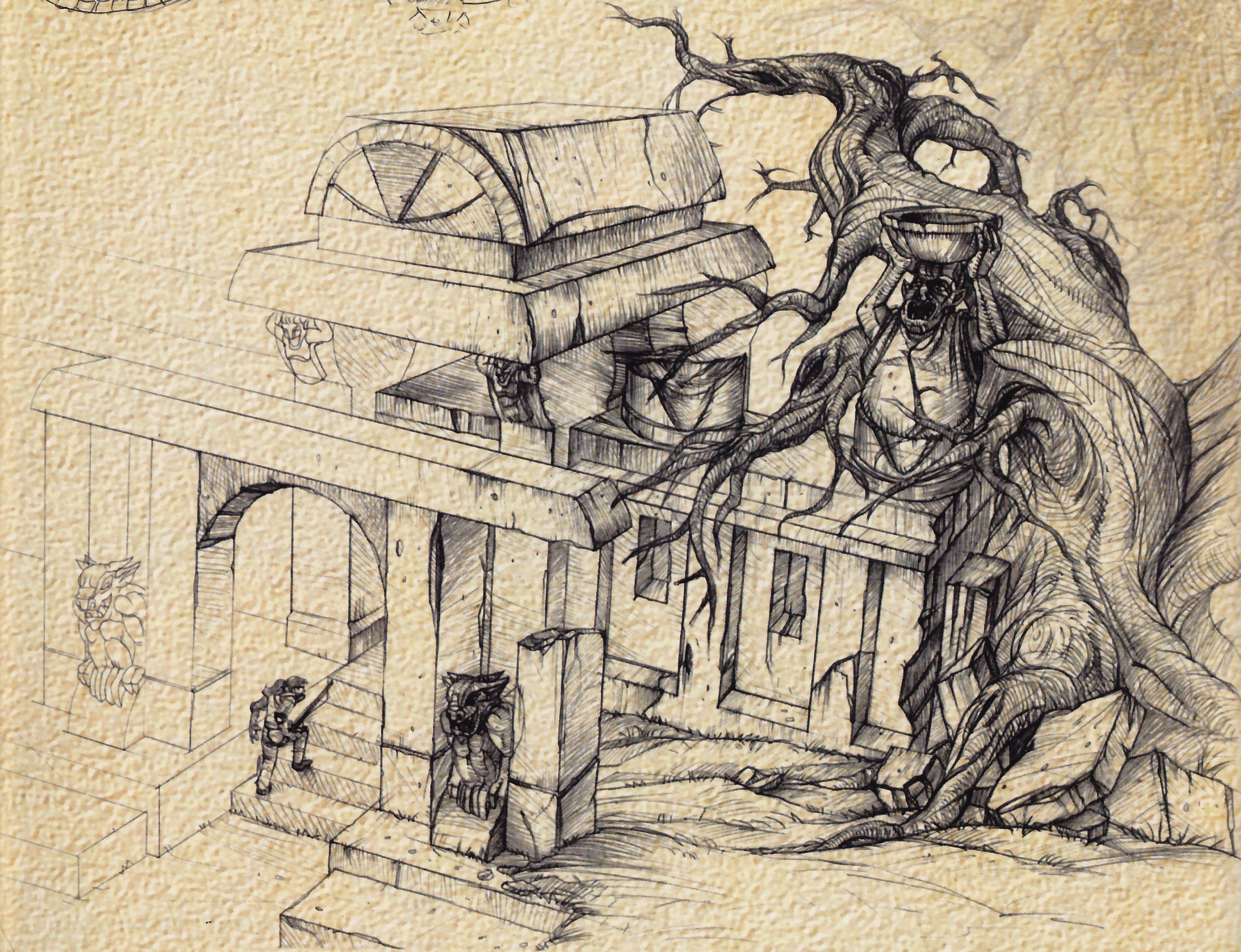
These concepts show some of the elements we tried to incorporate into the game graphics... crumbling statues look even more deformed and evil, organic shapes inspire fear of the unknown and over-grown buildings show the age of a structure.





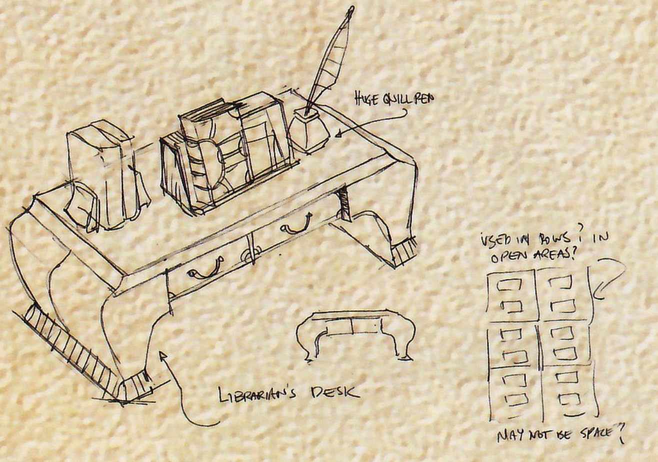


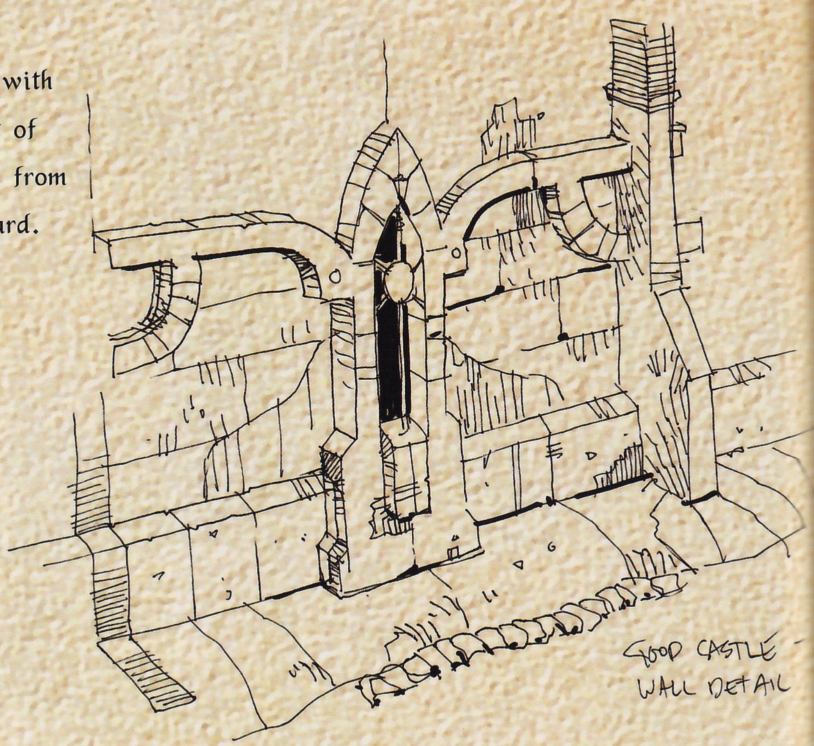


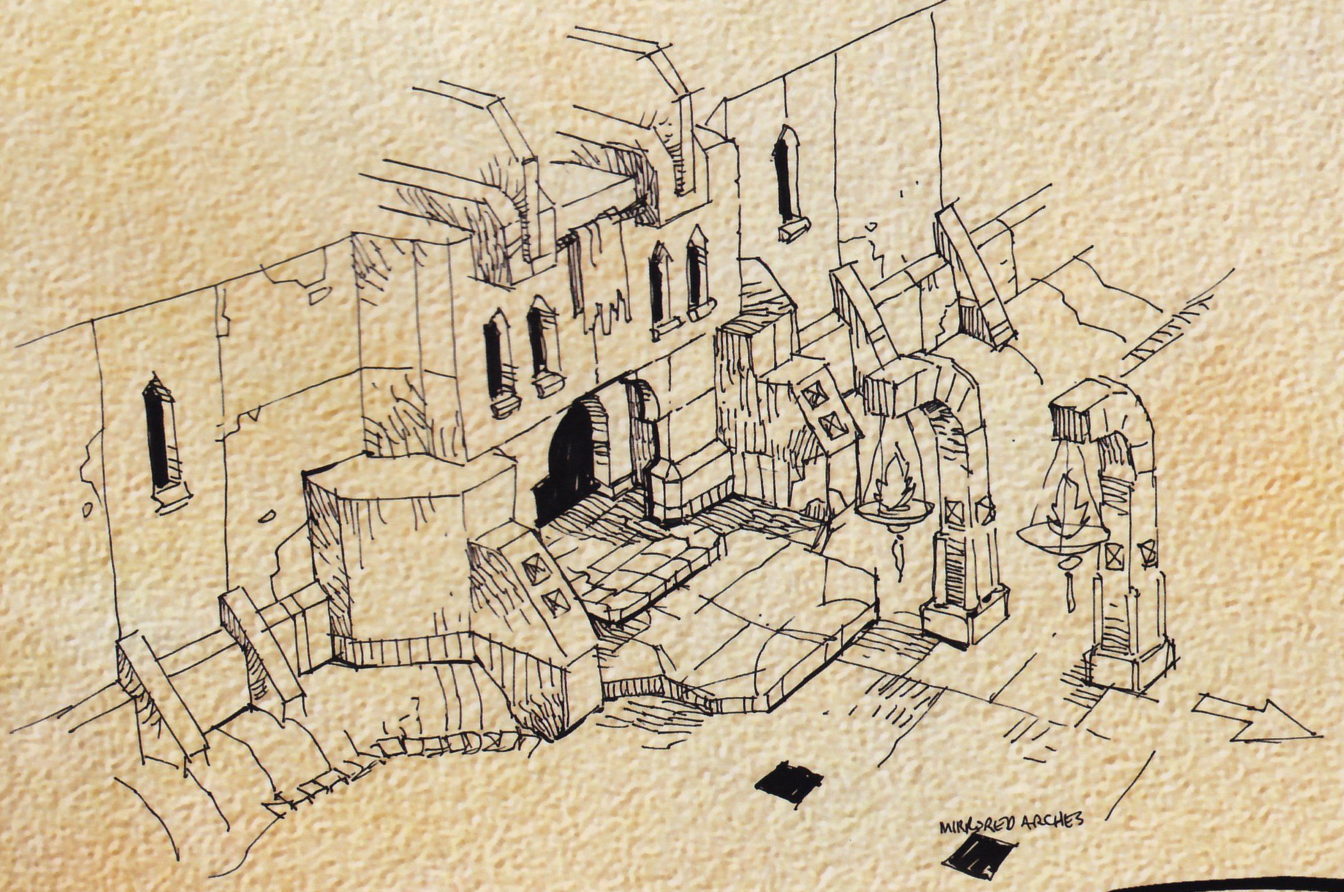


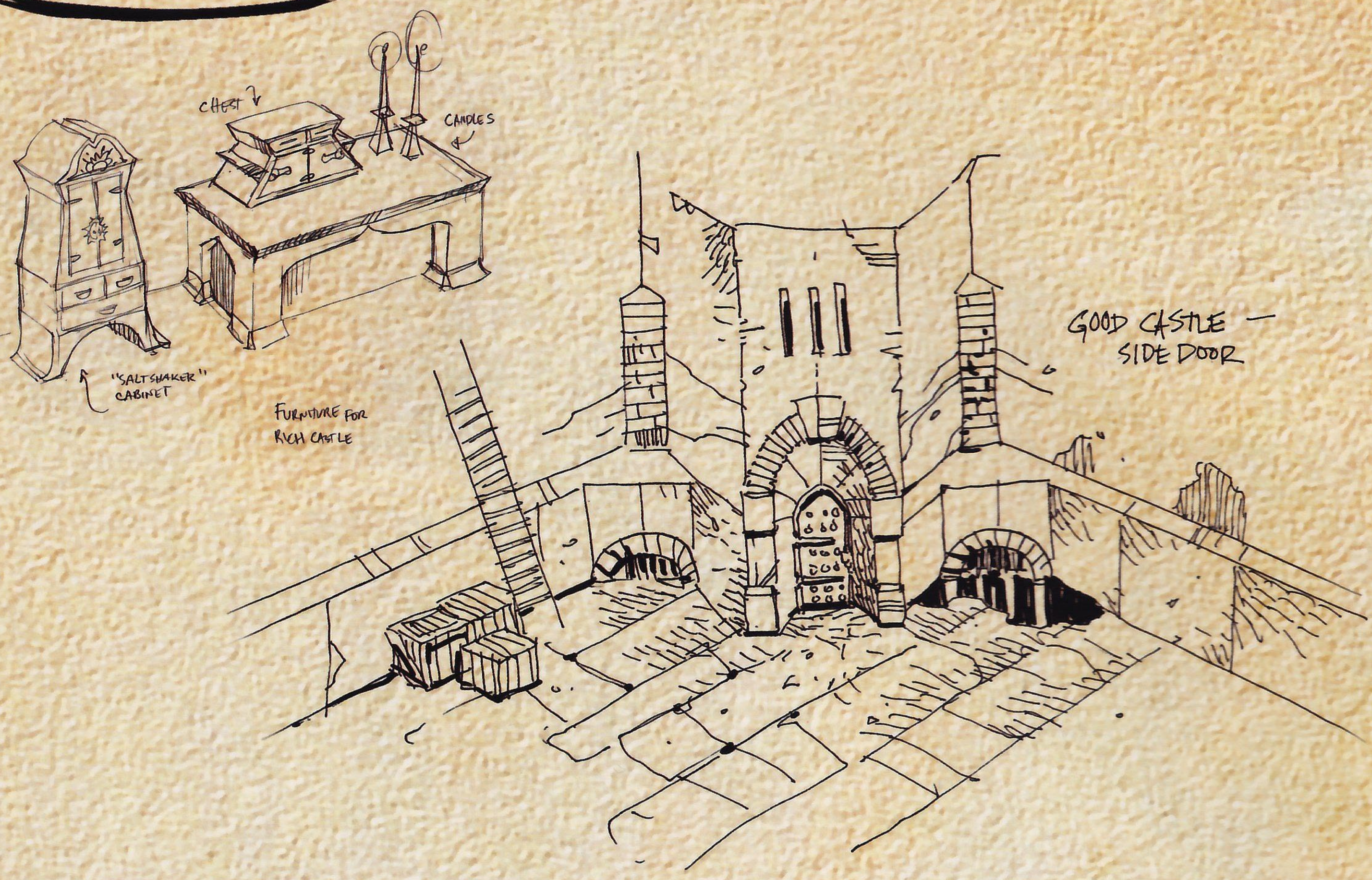
Castle

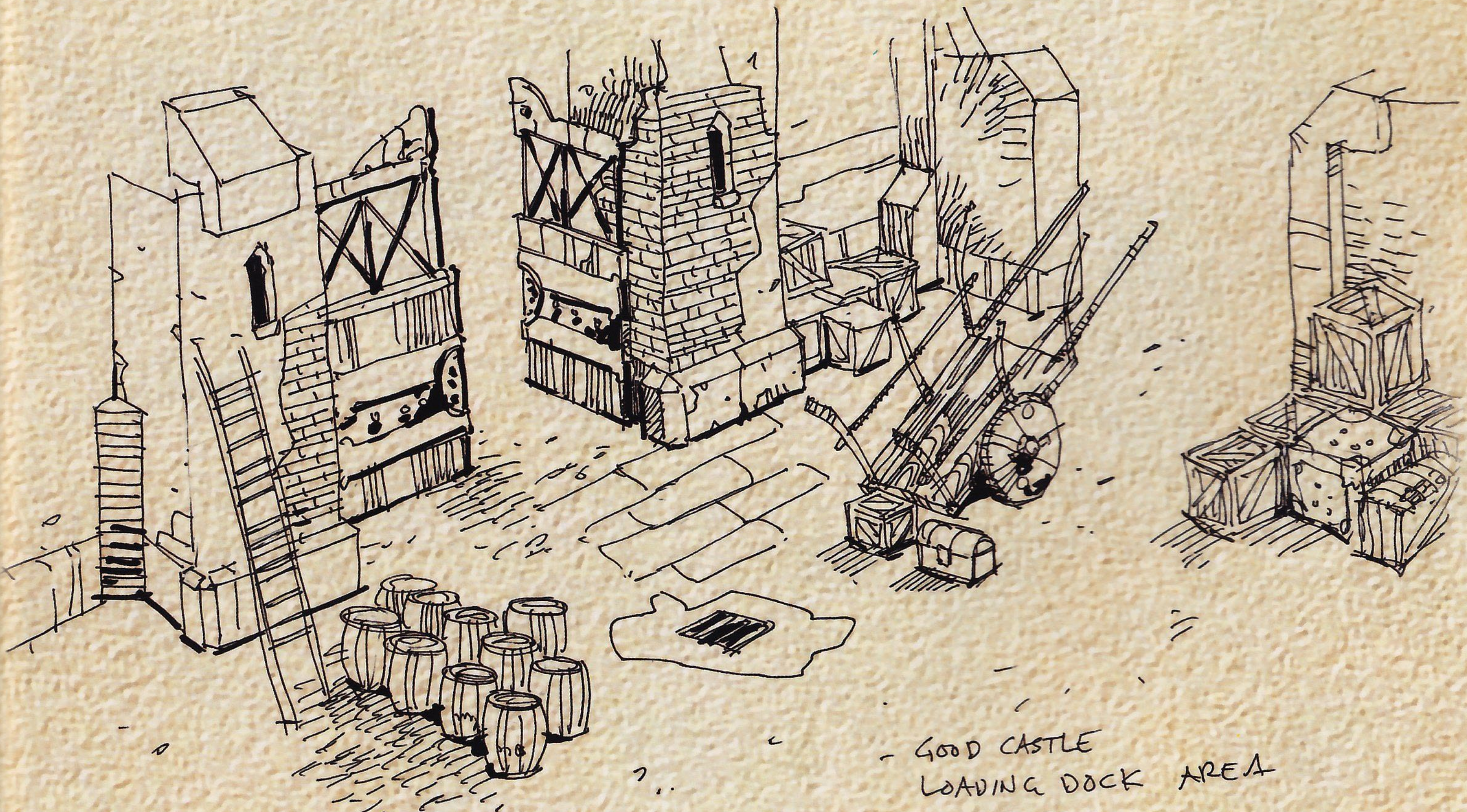
We didn't want the castles to have reference to age or wealth. Thus, the design had to be about simple shapes with areas of interesting detail. Having large areas in front of the building allows for any sort of scene you may wish, from a busy through-fare to an abandoned, desolate court-yard.







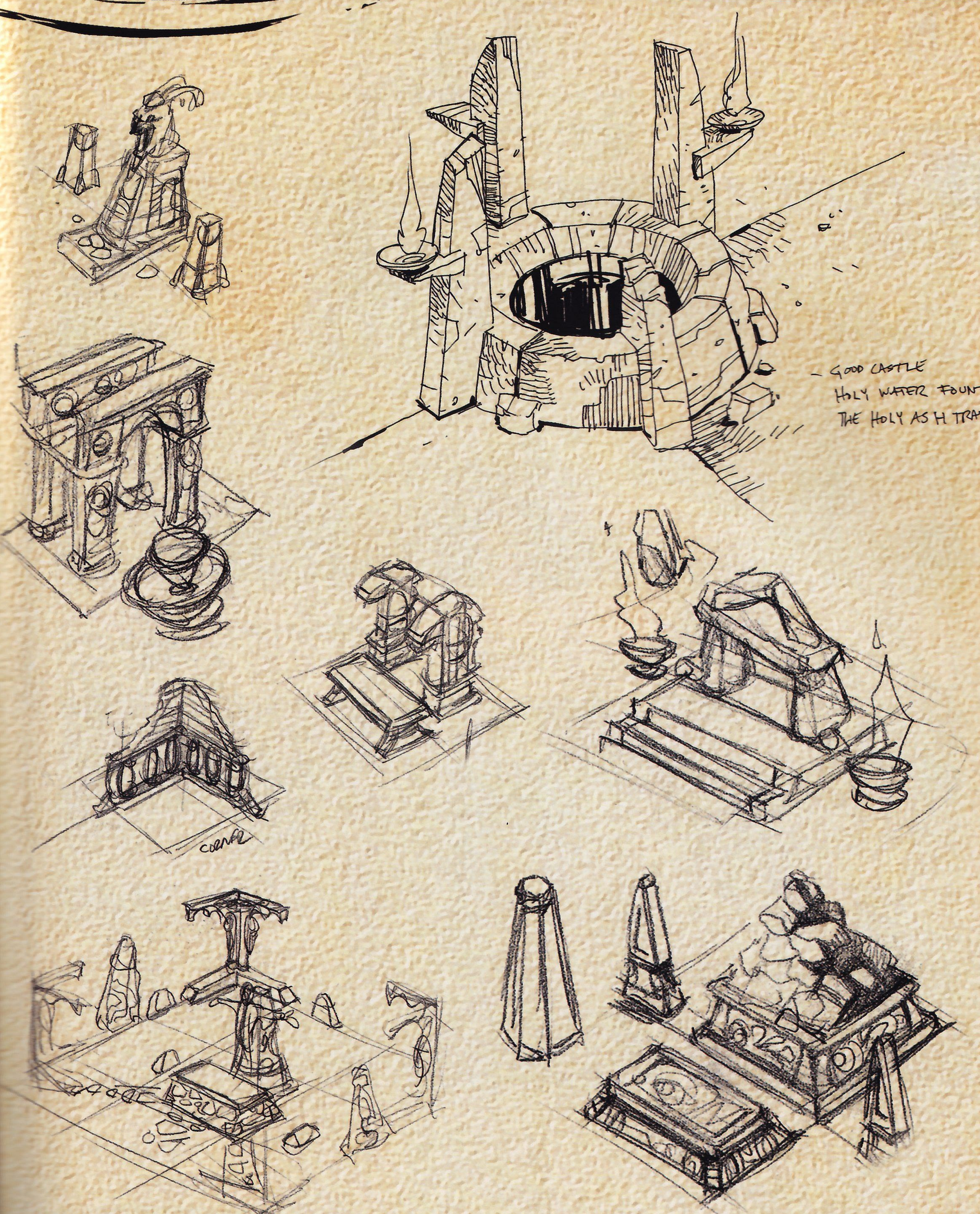

CHEST
CANDLES
"SALTSHAKER" CABINET
FURNITURE FOR RICH CASTLE
GOOD CASTLE — SIDE DOOR


GOOD CASTLE LOADING DOCK AREA

Crypt

Crypts should have a dry, crumbling atmosphere, with references to the statues and tombs of a graveyard. We played with many different forms and shapes before settling on our final look

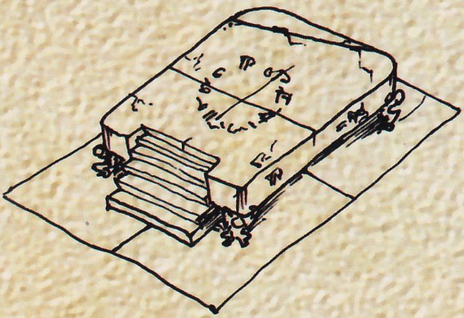


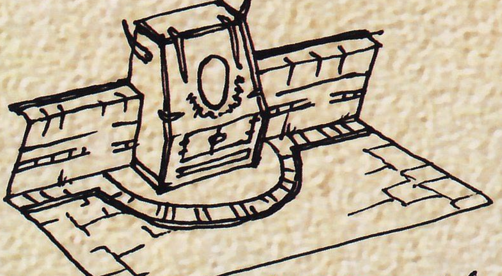

- GOOD CASTLE
HOLY WATER FOUNTAIN
THE HOLY ASH TRAN,
CORNER

Dungeon

The dungeons had to inspire a feeling of evil magic, sinister motives and a hostile environment. Hooks, spikes and evil runes were used to promote these feelings.

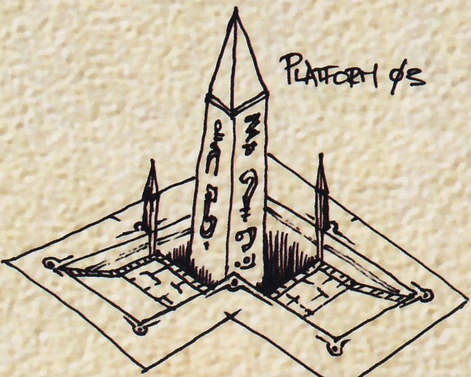
PLATFORM Ø1



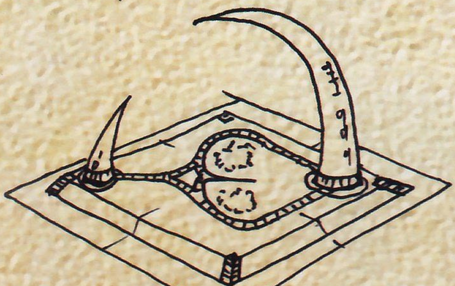


WALLSECTION Ø1

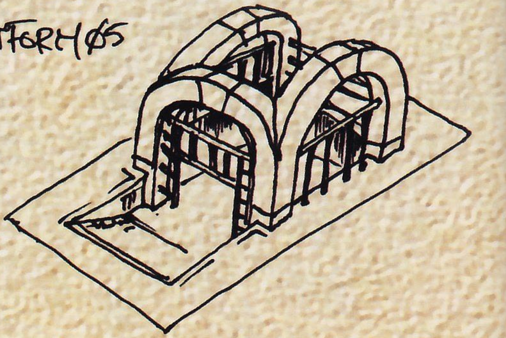
PLATFORM Ø3



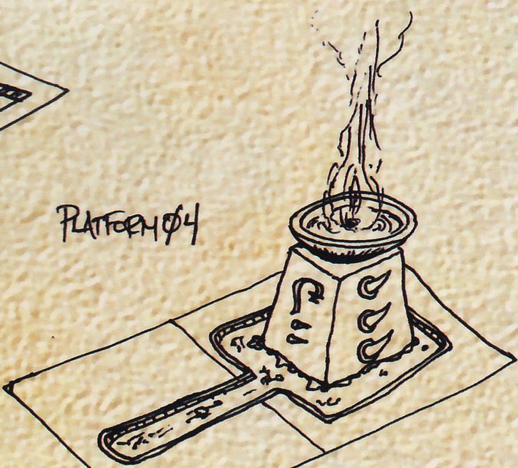
PLATFORM Ø2

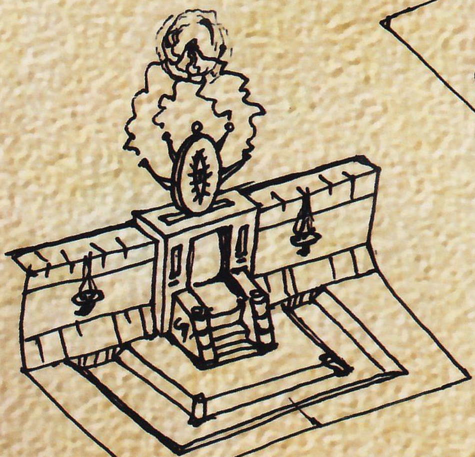


PLATFORM Ø5

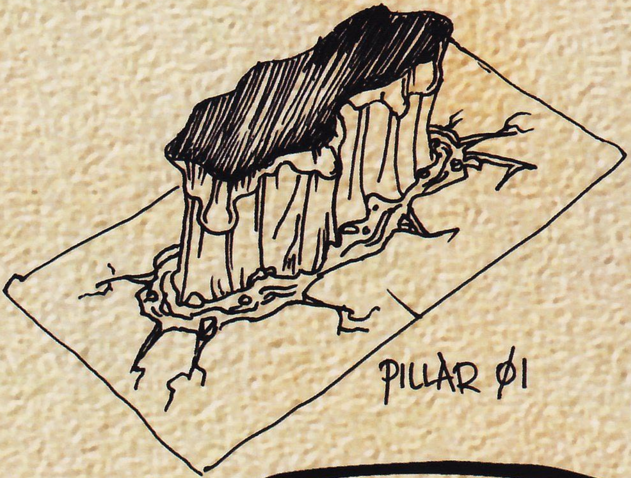


PLATFORM Ø4





WALLSECTION Ø2



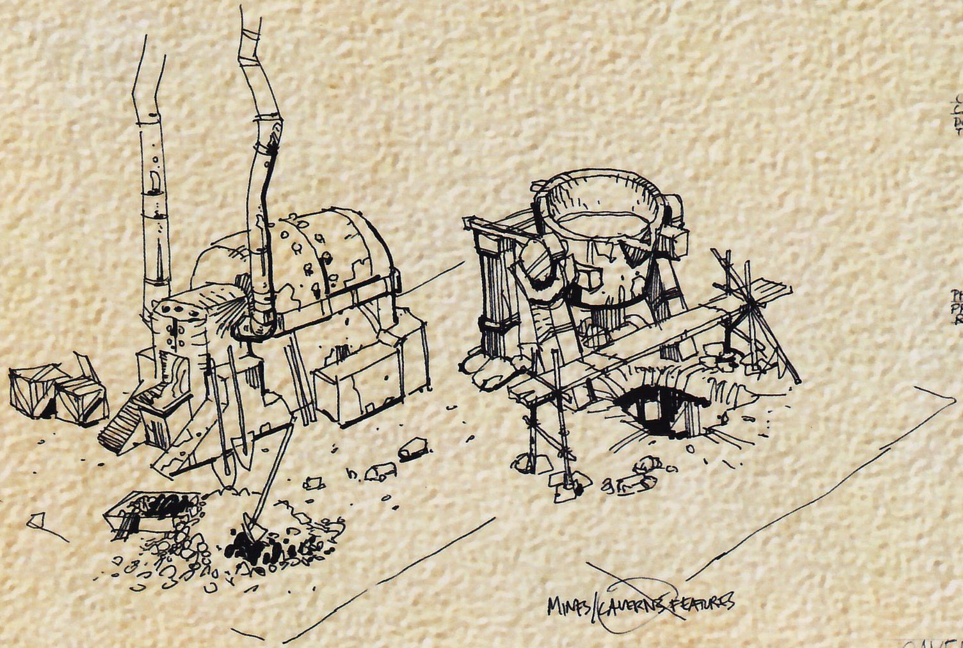
PILLAR Ø1

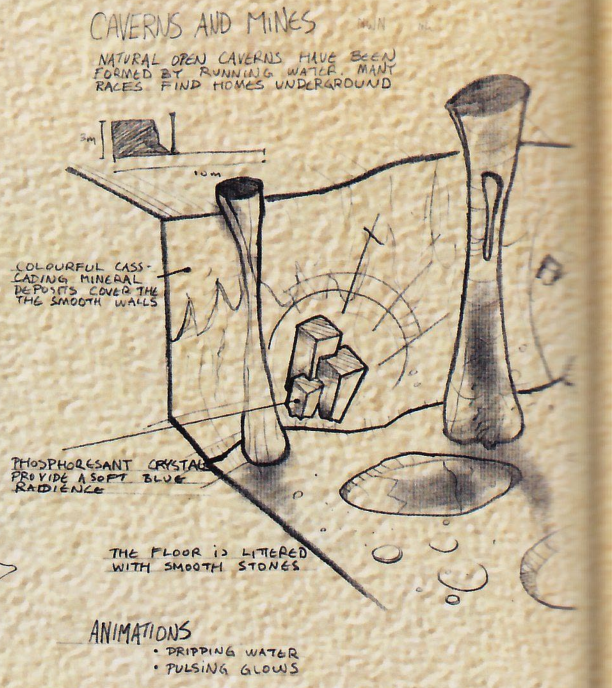


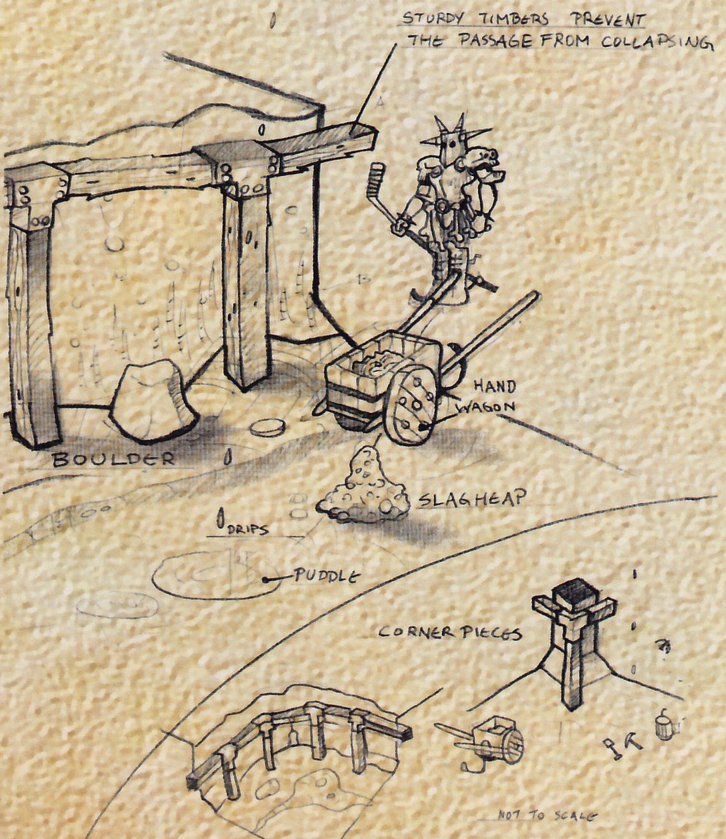


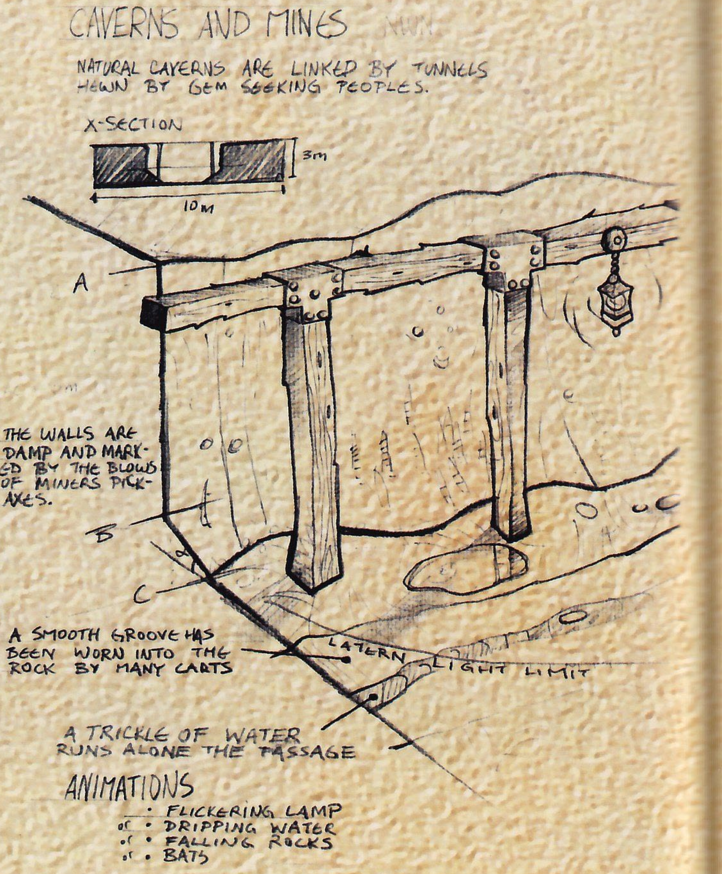
Mines

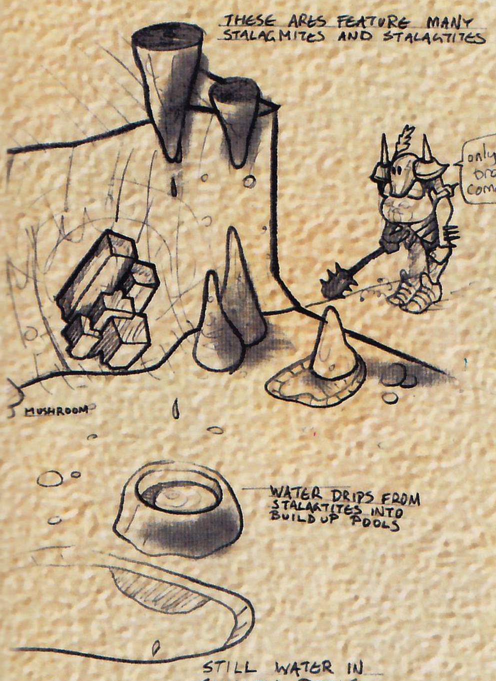
Caves can be fairly grey and dark, so we needed to find ways of introducing light of varying colour into the scene. Crystals, mushrooms and the introduction of mining equipment made this happen.

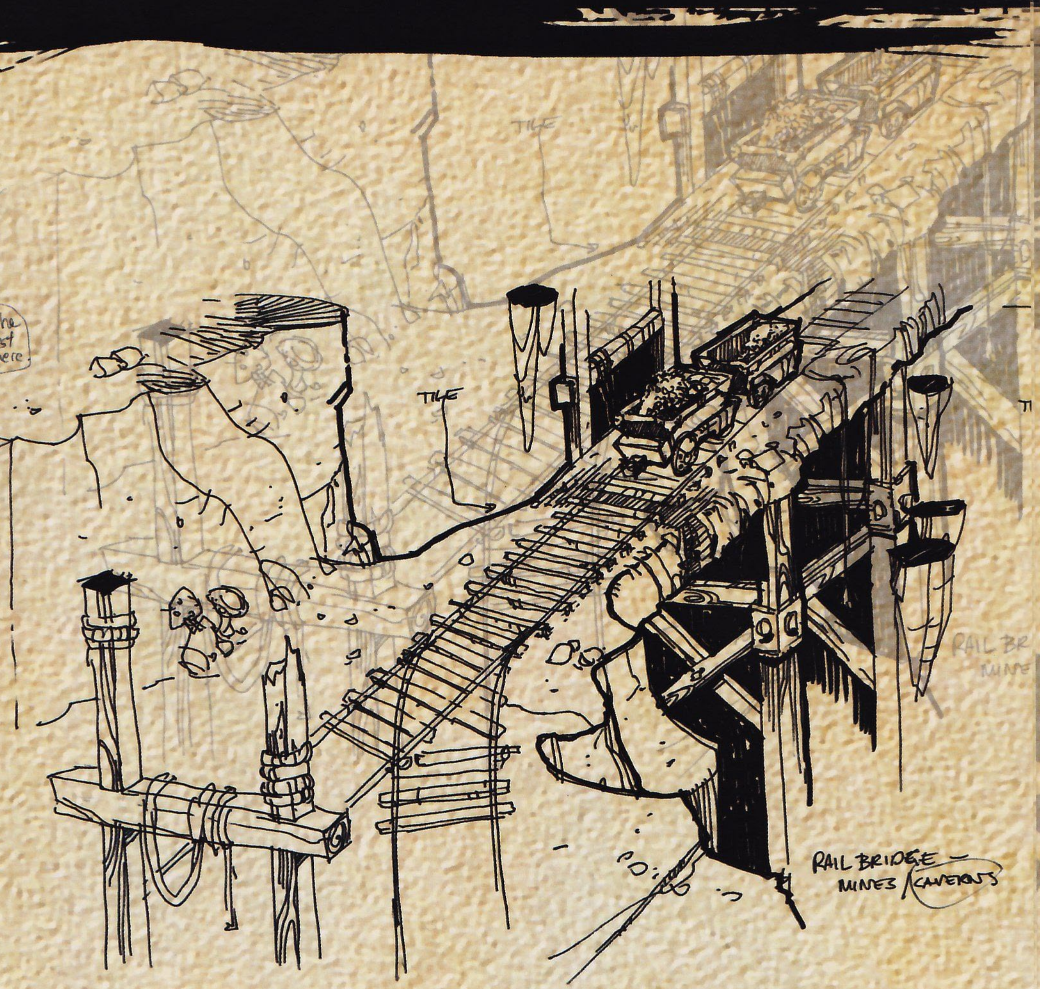


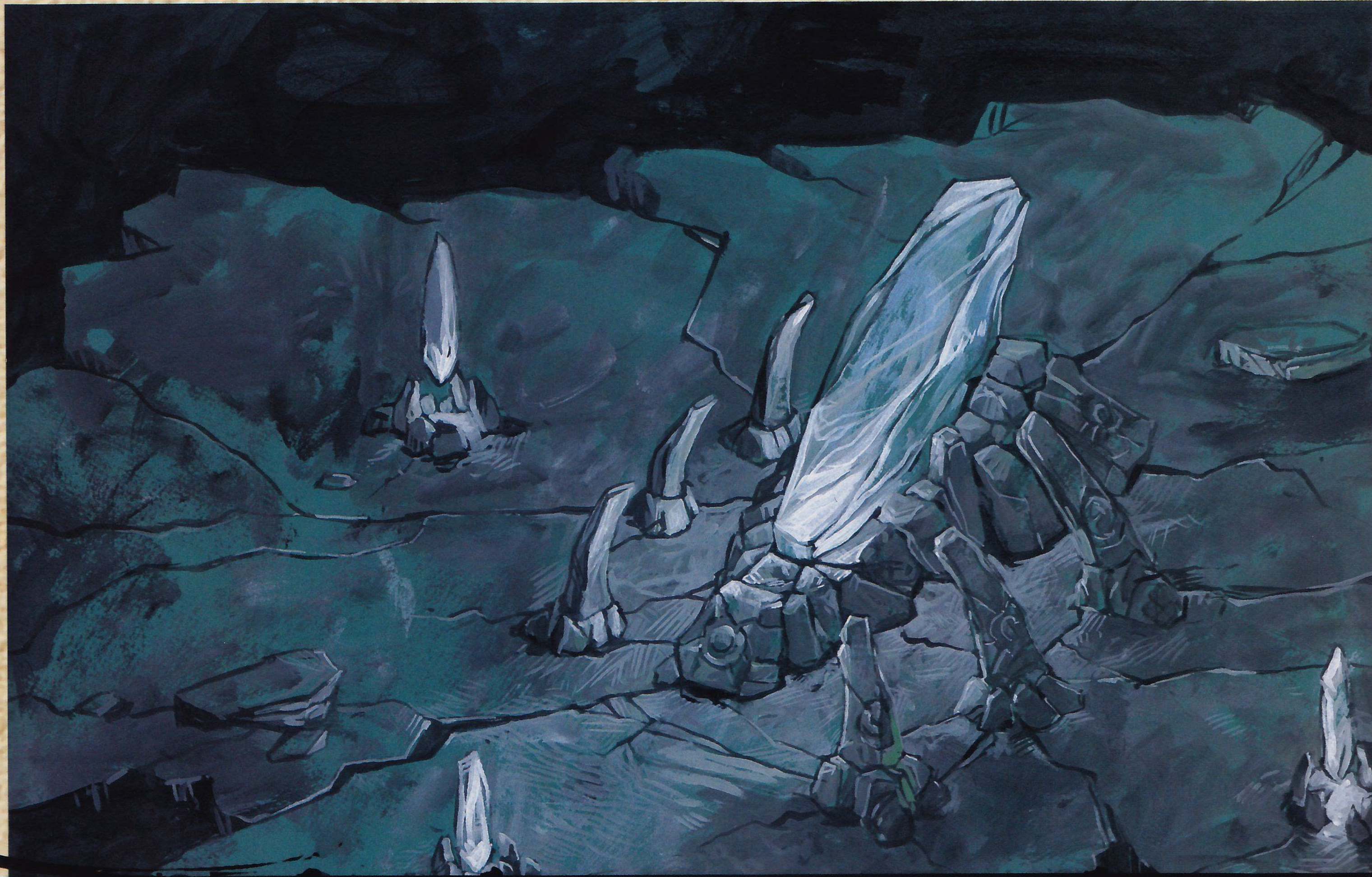






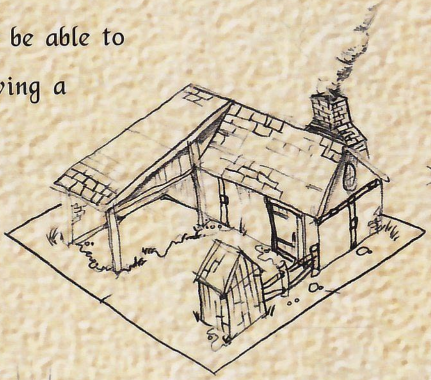

THESE ARES FEATURE MANY STALAGMITES AND STALAGTITES
only the bravest come here
MUSHROOM
WATER DRIPS FROM STALARTITES INTO BUILD UP POOLS
STILL WATER IN SHALLOW POOLS

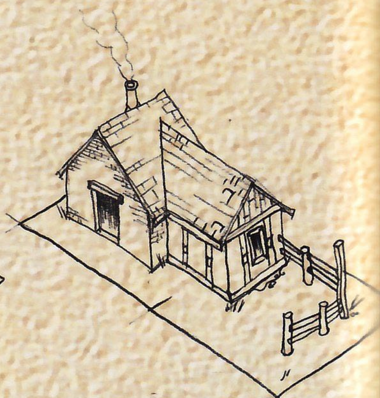

TILE
RAIL BRIDGE — MINES / CAVERNS

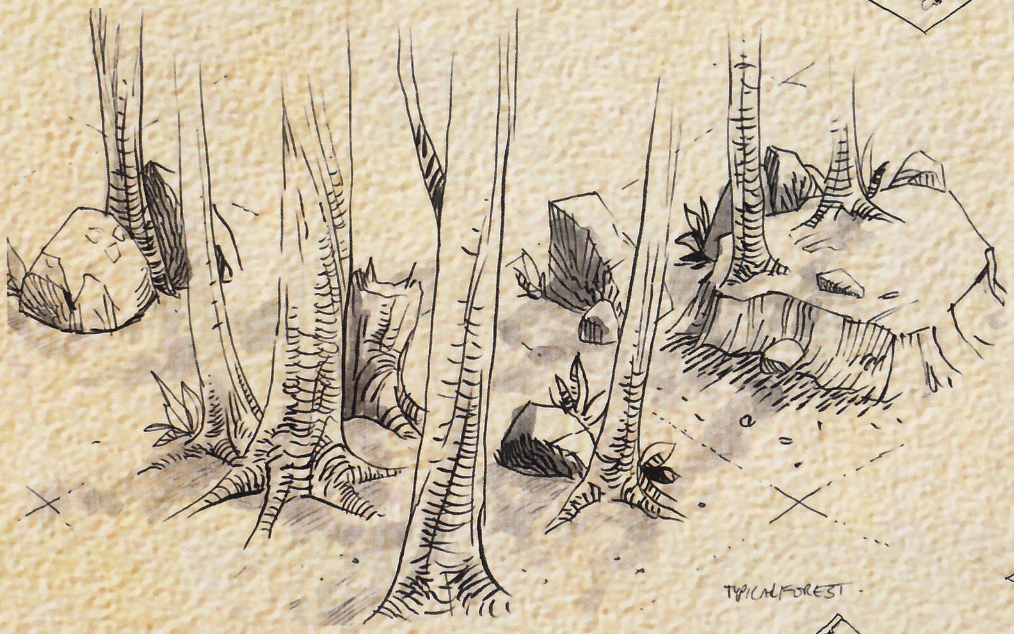


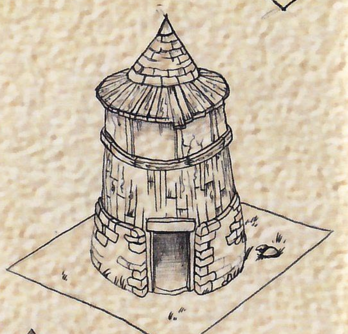
Rural

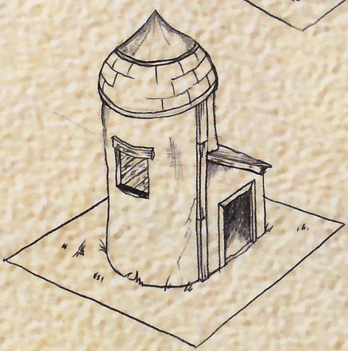
Our main focus for the rural area was that you had to be able to create a small town if you so desired. In this way, having a variety of buildings which didn't stray too far from a common design was fairly important.

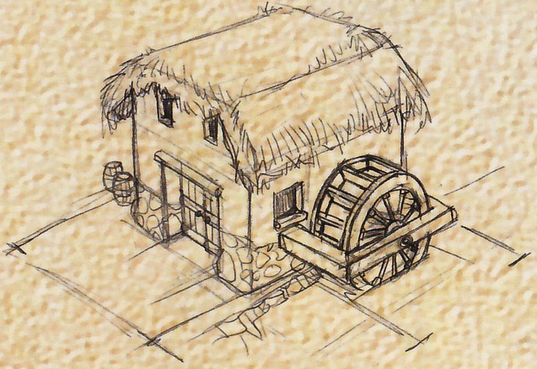


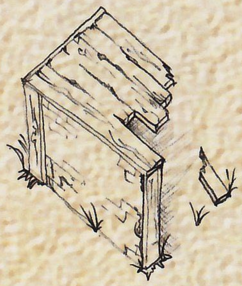


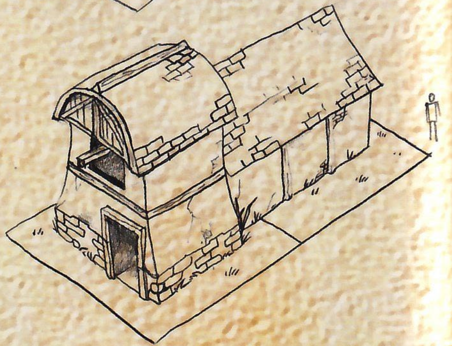


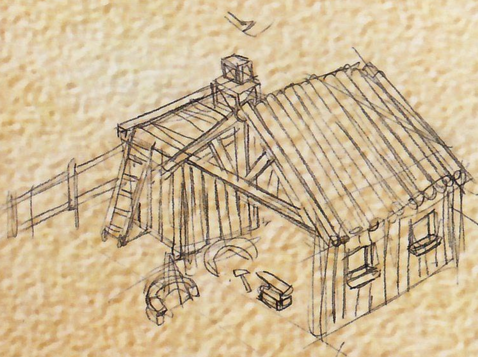


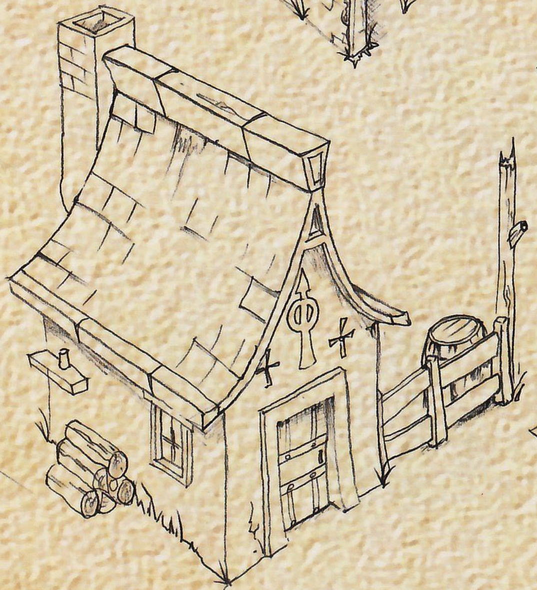


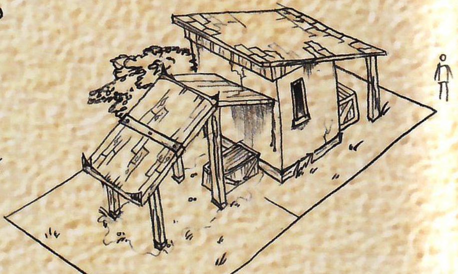

















5
6
7
8
13
14
12

WEAPONS





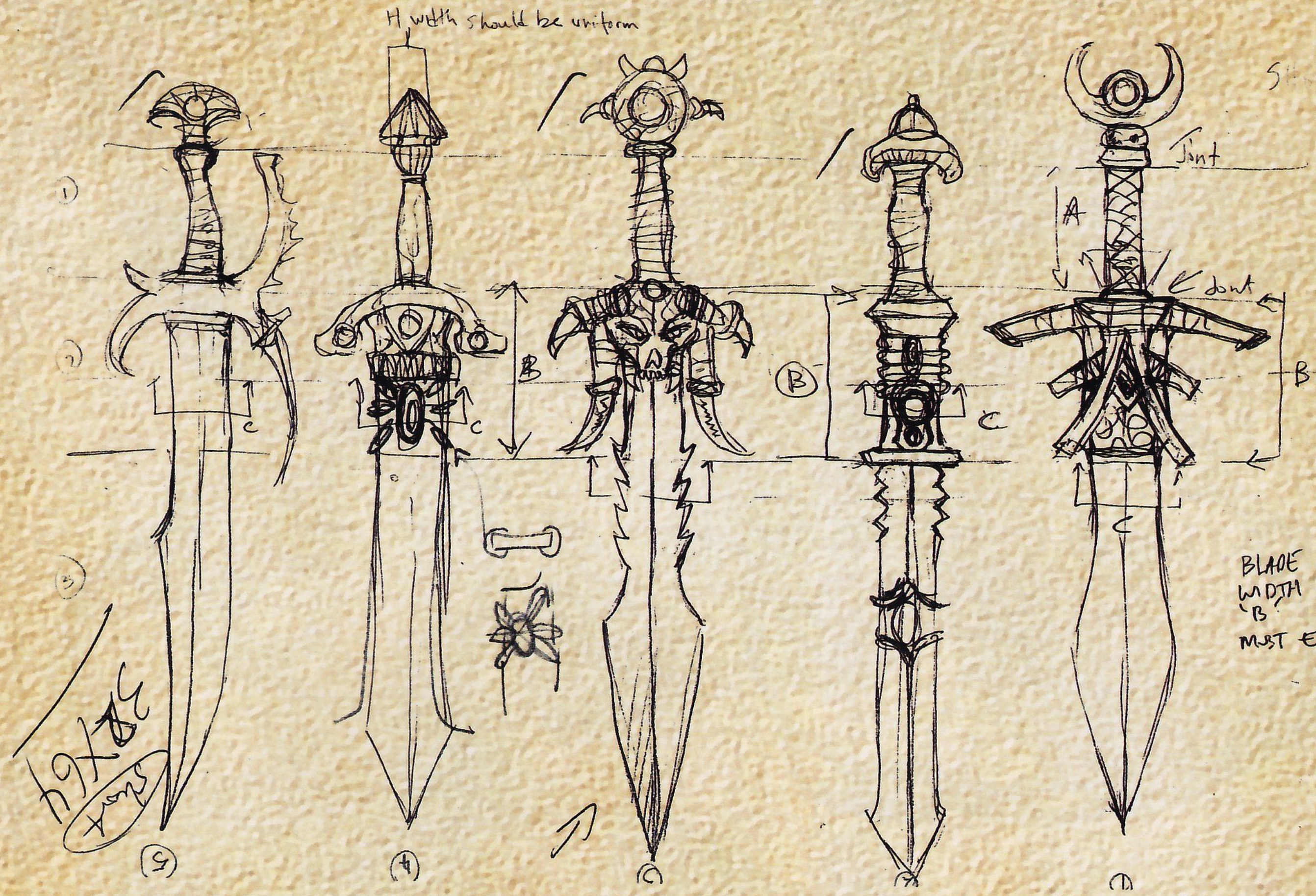


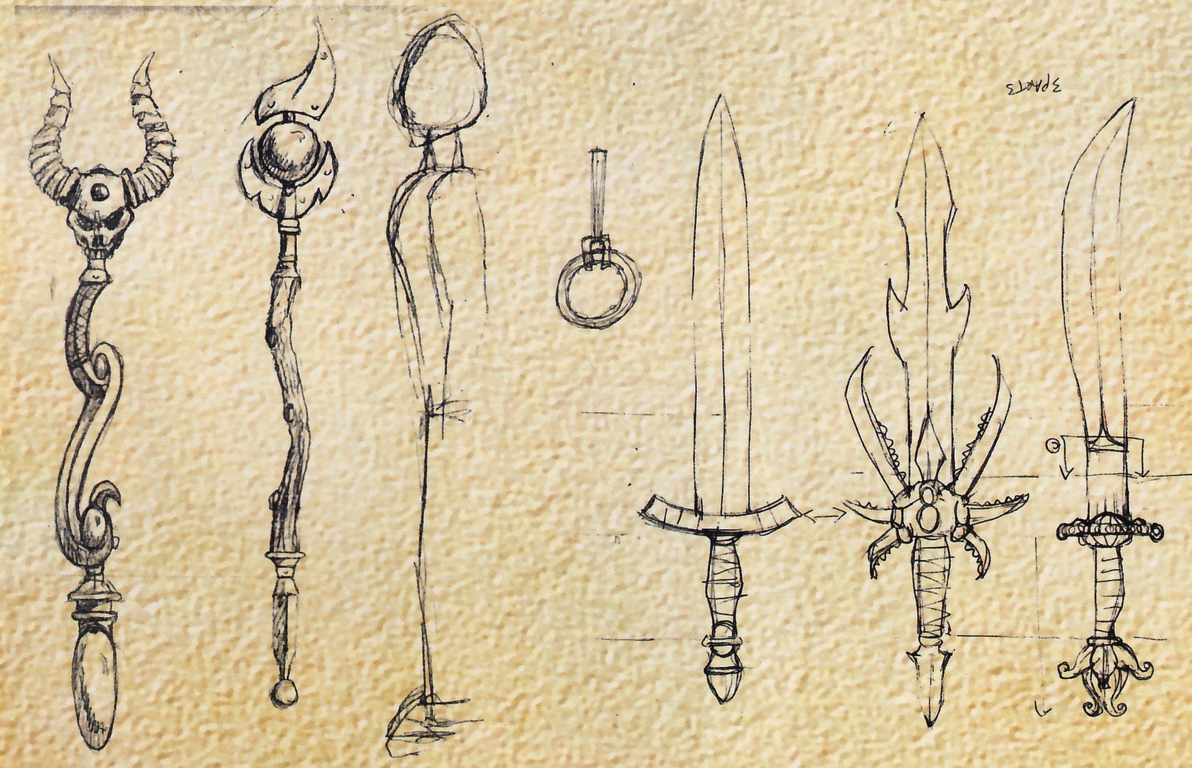


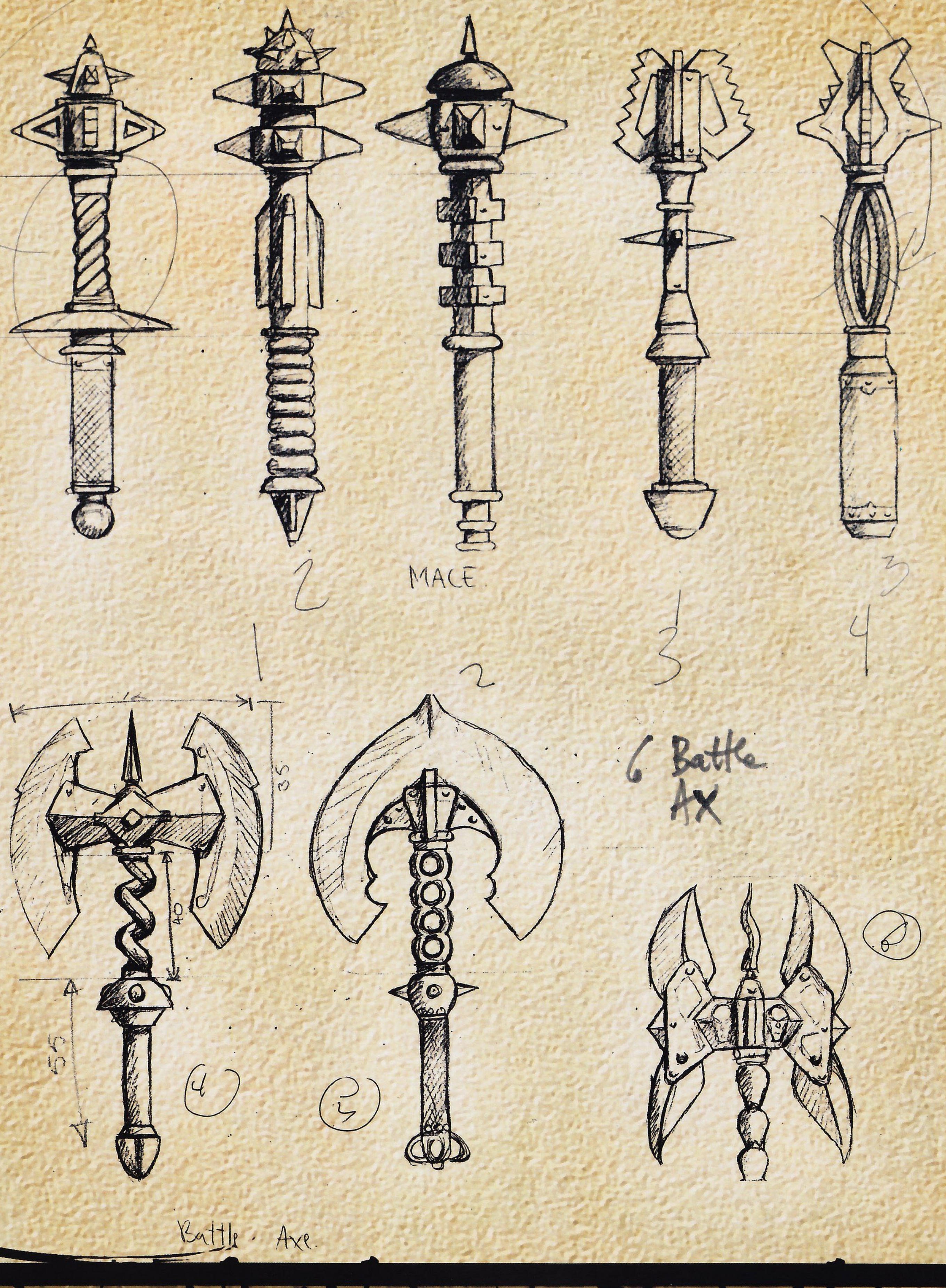






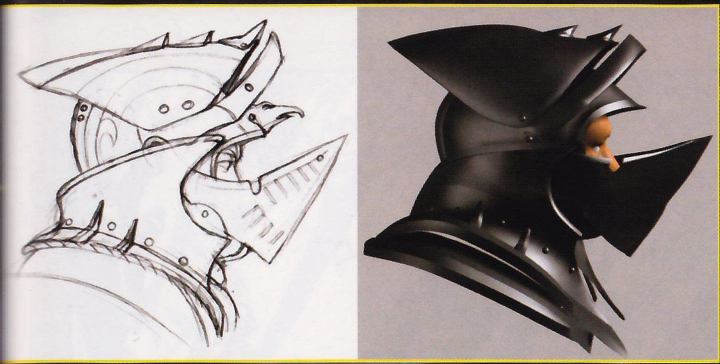
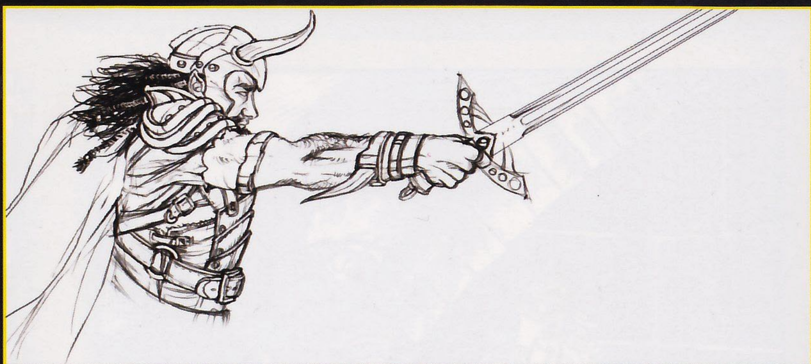

H width should be uniform
Joint
A
B
C
BLADE
WIDTH DURING
'B'
MUST EQUAL 'C'

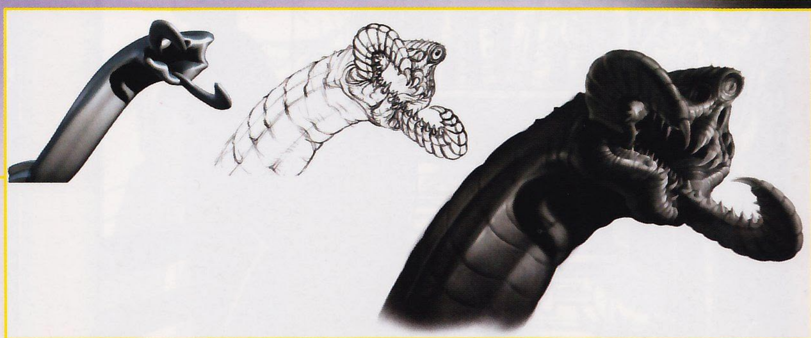
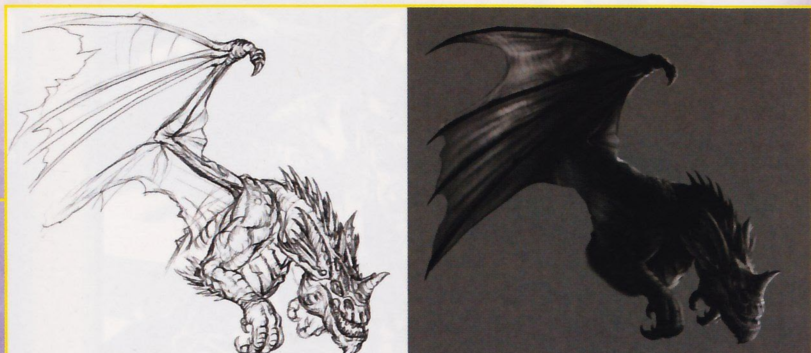
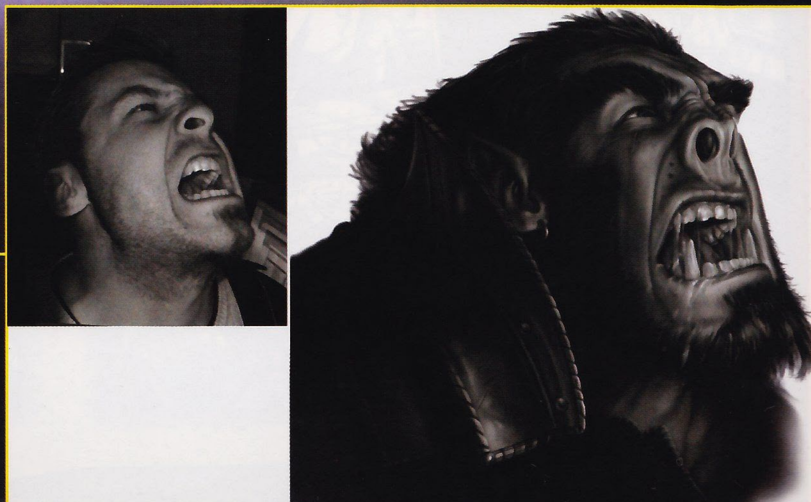



MACE
1
2
3
4
6 Battle AX
35
40
55
Battle Axe

PROCESS

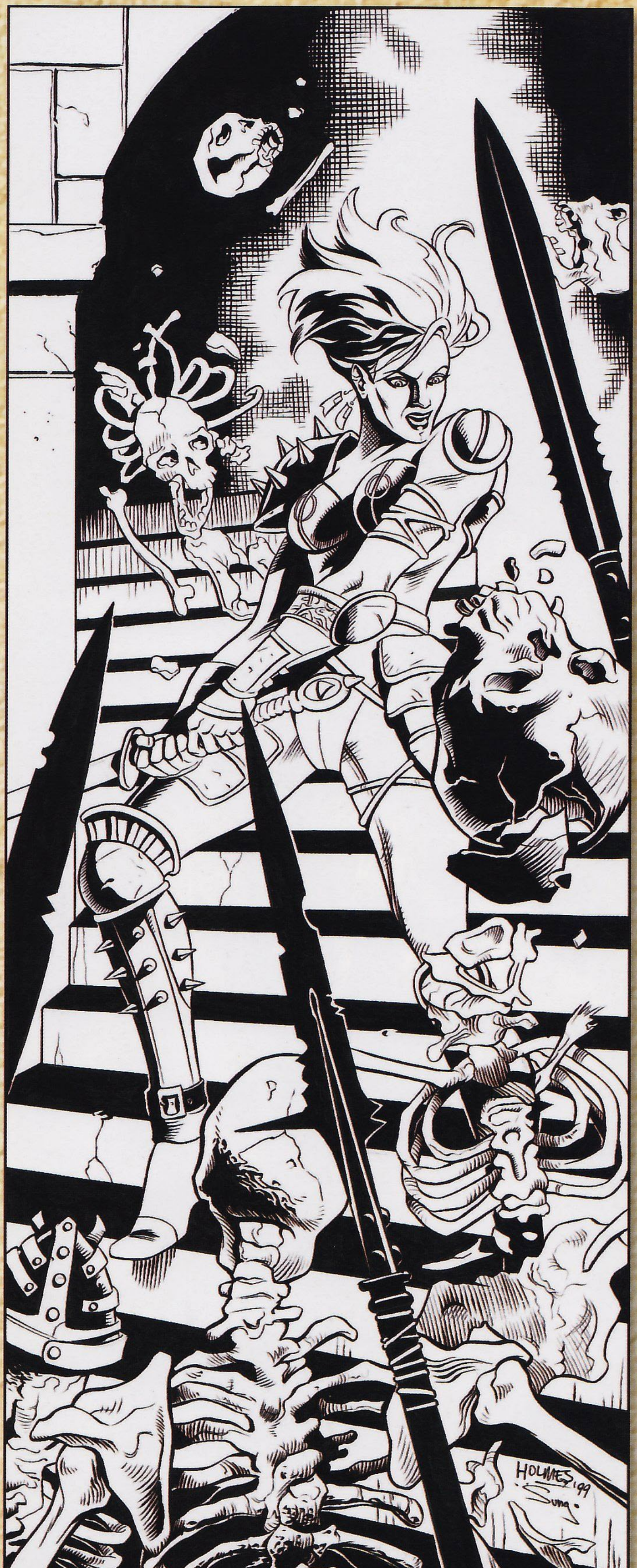


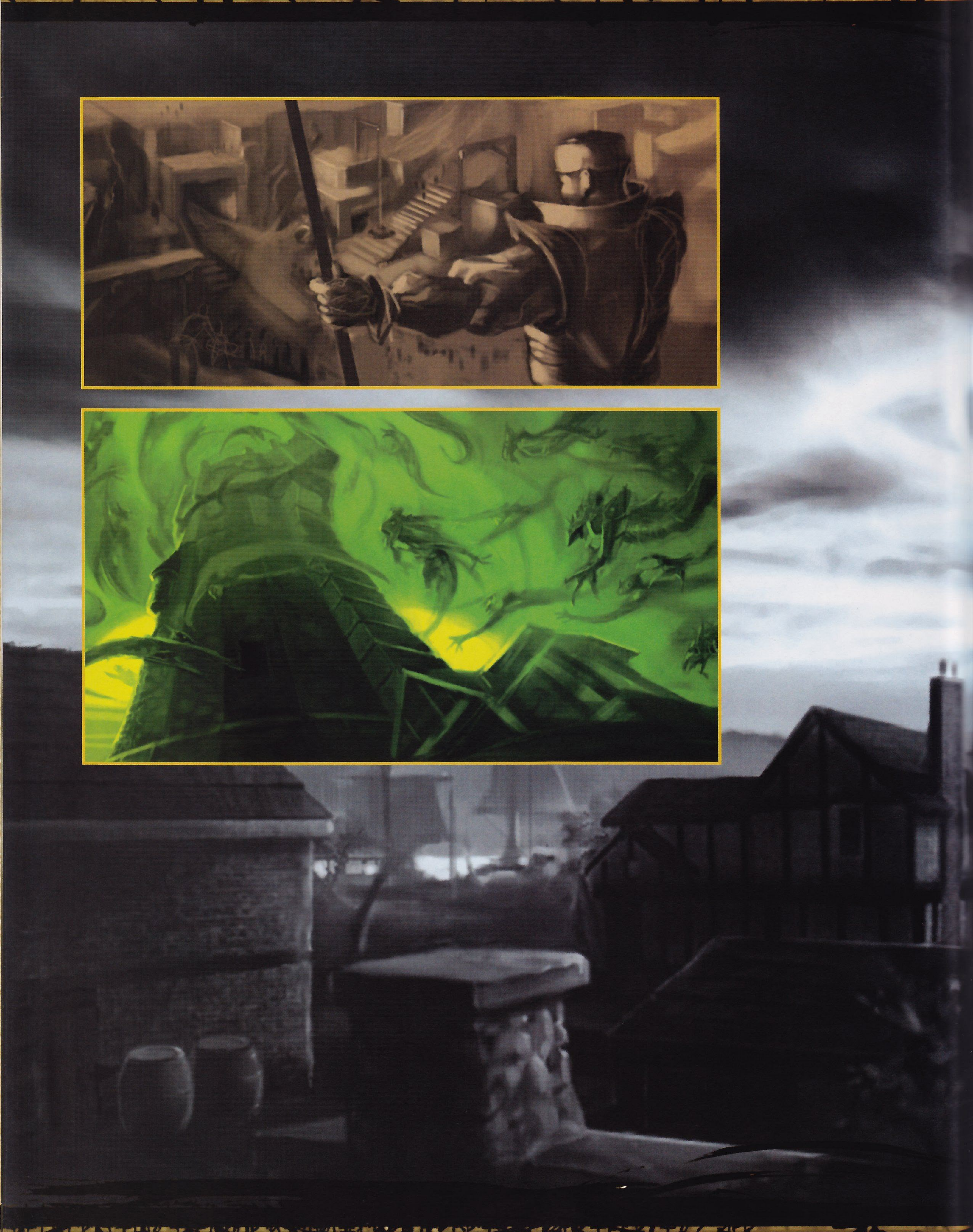

HOLMES '99 SWG


Sung.99.


SUNG 99
HOLMES

HOLMES '99
Sung

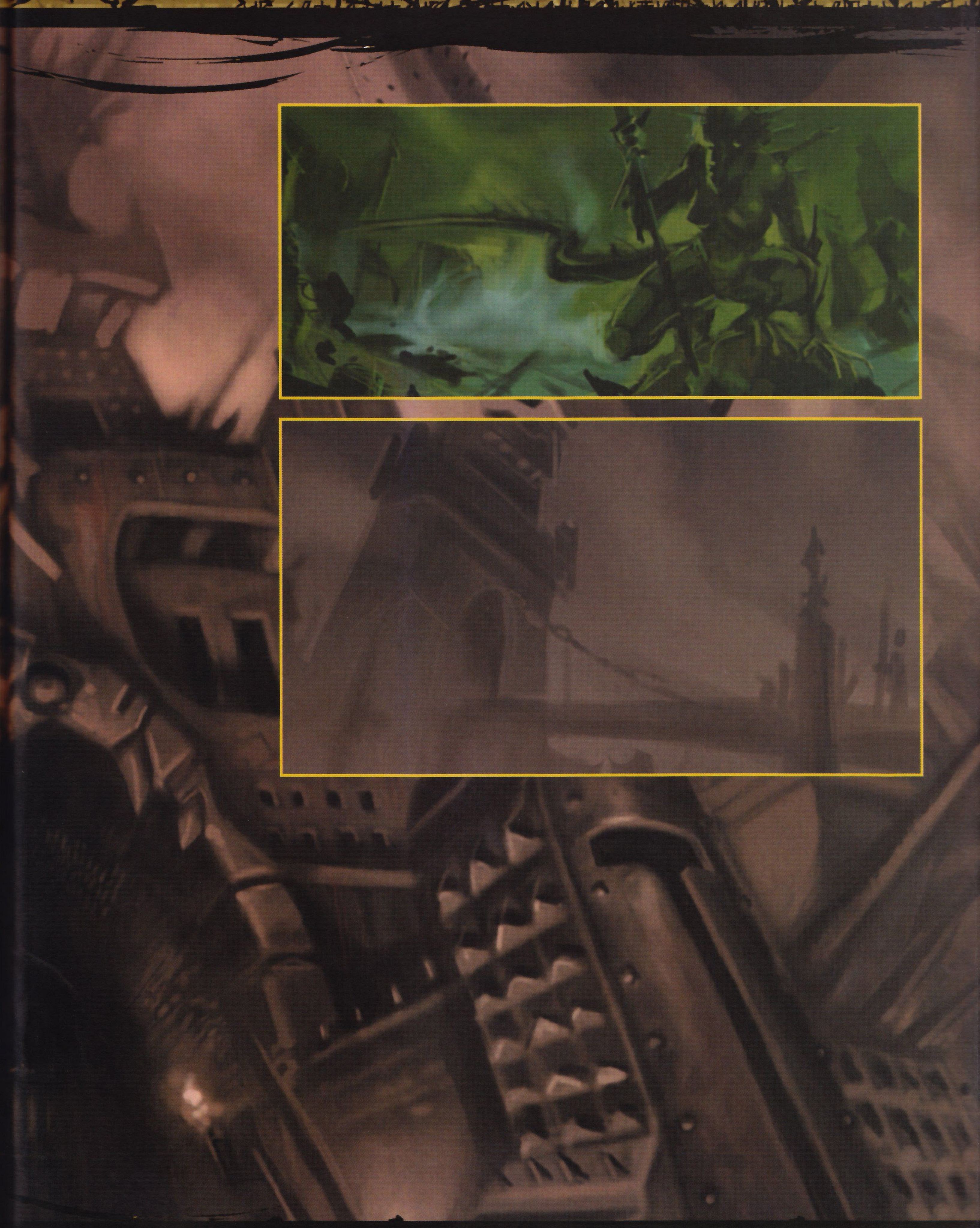




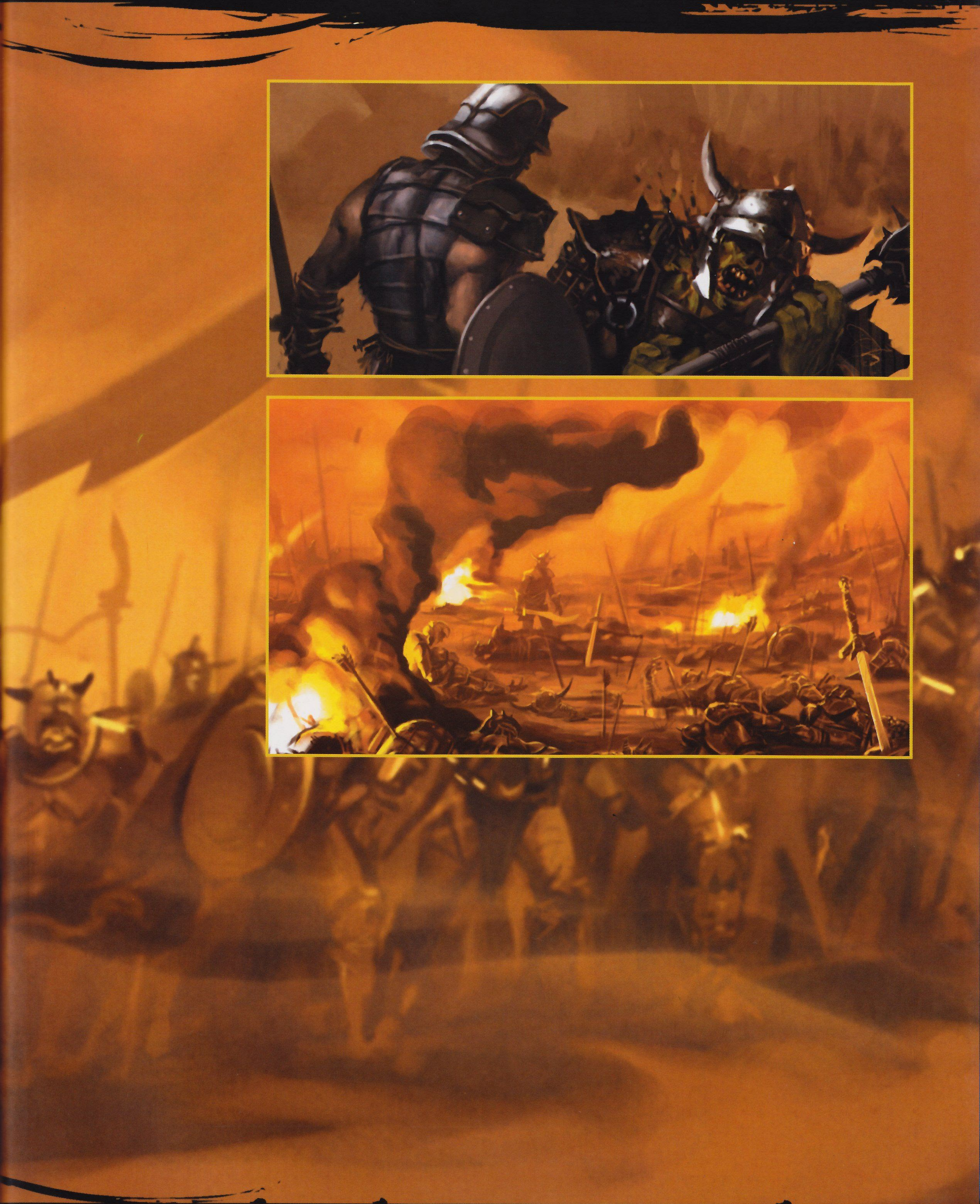





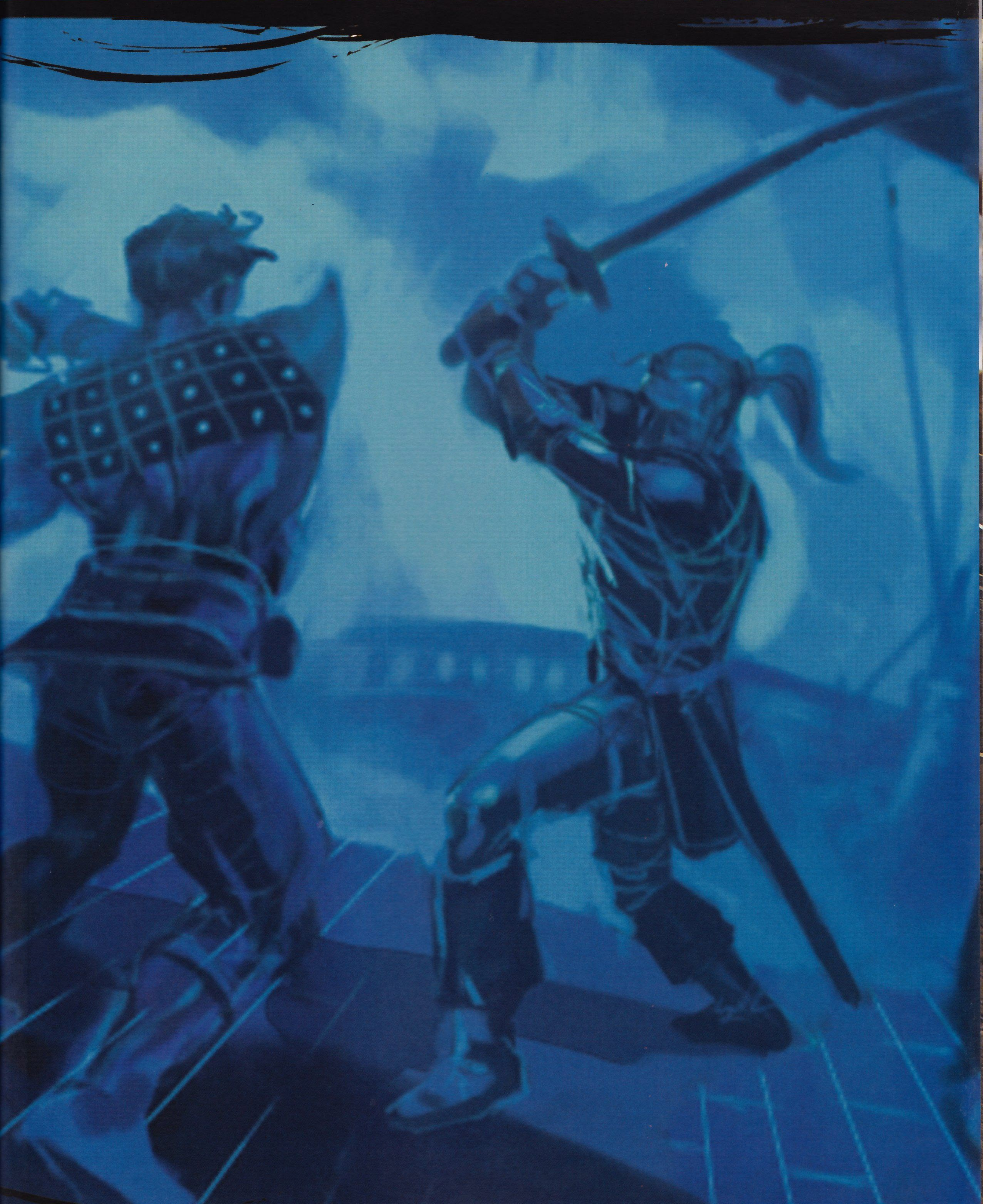
















EDITOR'S NOTE

Neverwinter was a five-year combined effort from a large and talented team at BioWare Corp., all committed to the creation of a great singleplayer and multiplayer roleplaying game, with one of the best RPG creation systems (the BioWare Aurora Neverwinter toolset) ever made, and the added bonus of powerful Dungeon Master tools and an extensive community effort post-release, thanks to the BioWare Community/Live team.

The art in Neverwinter, and in this book, reflects the collective passion of a large group of people at BioWare and we are honored to represent all the developers at BioWare and edit the content of this artbook. We thank our publisher Infogrames for making this book possible, and for distributing and marketing Neverwinter Nights world-wide. We also wish to specifically thank Todd Grenier, one of the artists at BioWare, for his efforts in collecting and organizing the art found in this book. Finally, most of all, we thank you, our fans, for supporting our development efforts at BioWare in the past, present, and future.

It is our sincere pleasure to write the editors' notes for this "Making of Neverwinter Nights" artbook. We have some amazingly talented, smart and creative artists at BioWare and they deserve all the credit for the beautiful art which is found in Neverwinter and our other games.

Long live Neverwinter Nights!
Thanks,

Sincerely,

Dr. Ray Muzyka   Dr. Greg Zeschuk
Joint CEOs and Co-Executive Producers, BioWare Corp.













www.neverwinternights.com

DEVELOPED BY BIOWARE CORP

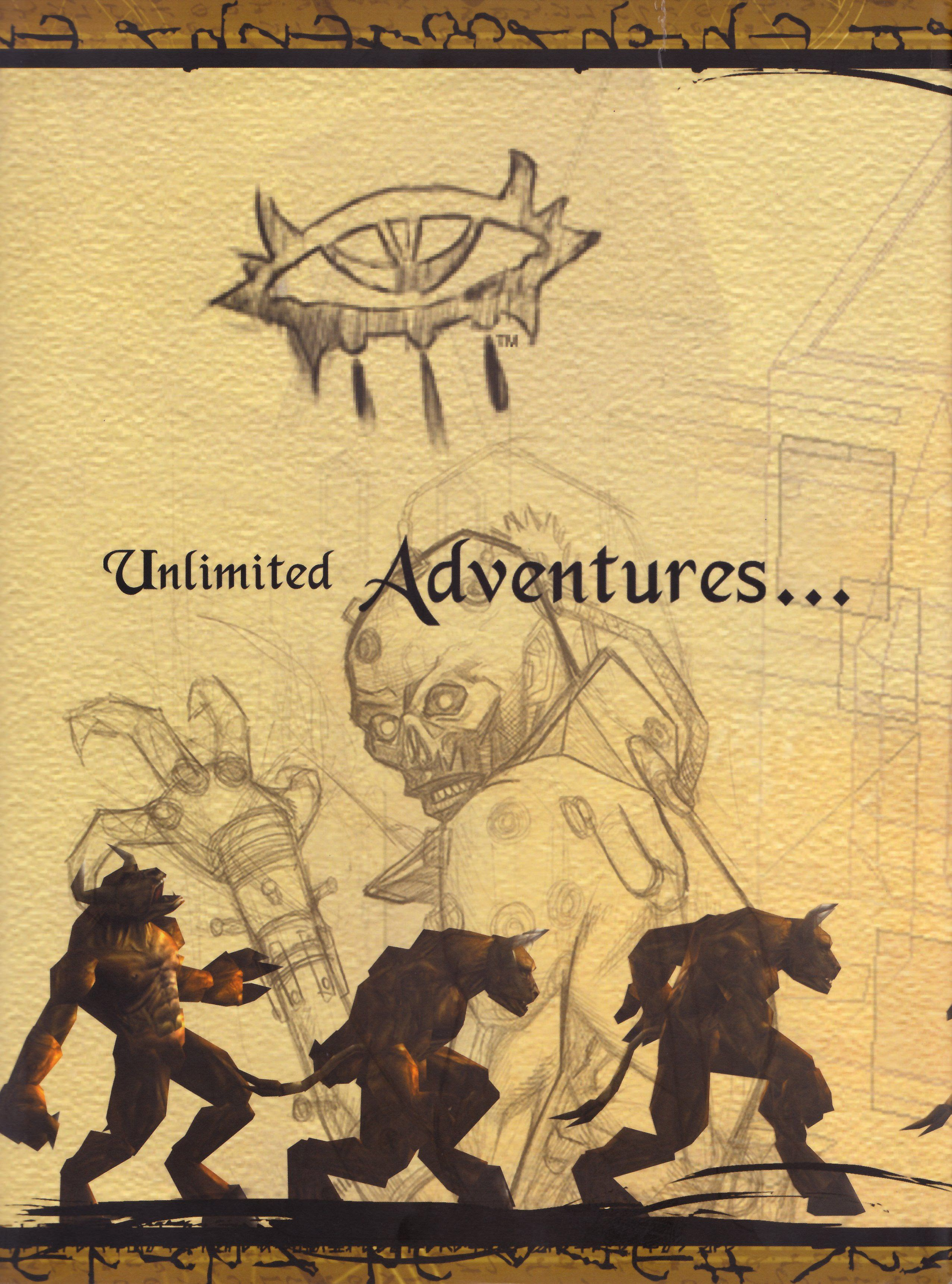
OFFICIAL Wizards of the Coast LICENSED PRODUCT

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Unlimited Adventures...